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THE MYSTIC THREE;

SHOWING WHAT HAPPENED TO THREE BOYS WHO BELIEVED ALL THEY READ.

By PIERCE CUTTING.

CHAPTER I.

SIMEON WALSINGHAM PUGSLEY.

"MARTHA, what on airth is the matter with that boy?"

"What boy, ma? What do you mean?"

"Why, Sim, there."

"Gracious me, ma, Sim isn't doing anything."

"No, ma'am, I ain't doin' a single thing."

"But I tell you he is, Martha."

"Nonsense, ma; why, the boy has been as quiet as a mouse for the last quarter of an hour."

"That's a sartain sure sign that he's up to some devilment or other."

"Now, that's just how it is," said Sim, dolefully.

"That's just how what is?" demanded his mother, sharply.

"Why, the whole thing. If I make too much noise, I get bullyragged and walloped."

"That's because you deserve to be," snapped Grandma Pugsley, acrimoniously.

"Then, why do you go bullyraggin' and wallopin' me when I keep quiet?"

"Young man," said Grandma Pugsley, solemnly, waving her skinny forefinger, "you've been bullyragged, have you? Only wait till your father comes home and you'll get the walloping, too."

"Now, what'll I be walloped for?" began Sim, whimpering. "I hain't done nothing."

"Because you ought to be. You need it."

"But I ain't done nothin'."

"Well, if you haven't," said Grandma Pugsley, suspiciously, "you're going to, so it's all the same. You ought to have all the thrashings you can get, anyway."

"Oh, I ought, ought I?" said Sim, with growing defiance.

"Yes, you ought."

"But suppose I don't want to?"

"Well, you'll have to, all the same."

"Then," said Sim, with desperate determination in his voice, "I might as well have the game as the name, so here goes."

And hauling off with a foot about the size of a cow-catcher, he delivered a desperate kick upon the stomach of an old black tom-cat, which reposed on the hearth between him and the fire.

Now, Tom was an especial favorite of Grandma Pugsley.

At sight of this outrage upon the person of her pampered pet, she leaped to her feet, while the cat uttered a wail of agony.

"You young viper," she shrieked, shrilly, "how do you dare to molest my poor Pinky in that way?"

"I'll do it again, then maybe you'll find out."

And as Sim spoke he made a second application of his pedal extremity to poor Pinky, who was as yet too much amazed to know exactly what had happened to him, except that it hurt him very much. This time he did find out. And so did Grandma Pugsley.

For Pinky described a parabola through the air, and uttering a wail of combined malevolence and misery, which would have done credit to a German band, descended with outstretched claws upon his mistress's venerable head.

To use a hackneyed expression, the scene which followed baffles description.

Grandma Pugsley uttered a shriek of terror, and tumbled headlong to the floor, with the cat clawing a wholesale assortment of fresh wrinkles in her face.

Mrs. Pugsley, who had viewed the foregoing proceedings with paralytic horror, now seized her offspring by one of his graceful ears.

"You imp," she cried, "you'll be the death of me yet, and you well know it."

"Come, come, Martha," called a cheery voice from the door; "what has that unfortunate boy been doing, now?"

"Nothin', pop!" screamed Sim, bound to get in the first word.

"Nothing, you young scorpion," squeaked Grandma Pugsley, who had just succeeded in freeing herself from the embraces of her favorite Pinky; "well, he's done enough to deserve the soundest thrashing he ever got in his life."

"I haven't!" wailed Sim.

"You have!" screamed grandma, "and if you don't give it to him, Aaron Pugsley, I'll change my will to-morrow."

At this dread threat Mr. Pugsley turned pale.

It was not the first time that he had heard the same words.

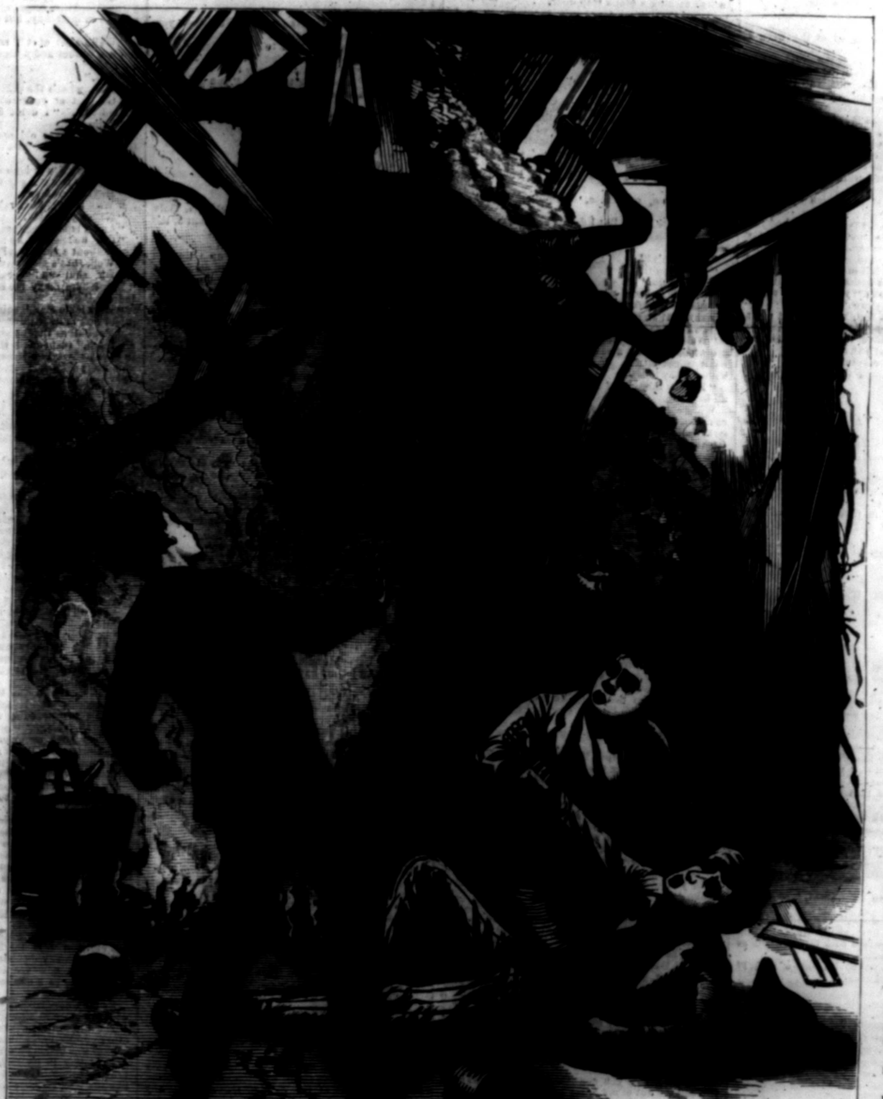
Whenever he and Grandma Pugsley had a dispute, which, owing to the mischievous proclivities of Sim, happened very frequently, Sim's grandmother used this great weapon of coercion.

The old lady owned some property in the village of Suckerville, which her son fondly hoped to inherit, and which he knew a distant relative had been casting longing eyes upon.

The result was, therefore, a natural one.

Releasing Sim, he reached up for a strap which hung suspended from a hook in the wall.

As she viewed this proceeding, Grandma Pugsley rubbed her



THE MYSTIC THREE.—"A WANDERING JACKASS HAD STRAYED INTO THE ENCLOSURE, AND THE ROTTEN FLOOR OF THE HUT HAD GIVEN WAY BENEATH HIM."

READ OUR SKETCHES—"THE UNITED STATES NAVY, THE NAVAL ACADEMY AND TRAINING SHIPS."

hands in unholy glee, and Sim felt his heart sinking into his boots.

"Simeon Walsingham Pugsley," said the father of that injured youth, gravely, "you want exercise."

"Oh, no, I don't, pop."

"Yes you do, young man."

"But I'm sure I don't."

"Well, I'm certain you do, so that settles it."

"I s'pose it does," said Sim, resignedly; "and I s'pose it settles me, too."

"No remarks, sir; walk into the wood-shed."

"I'm willing to walk a good deal further than that."

And Sim made a frantic dash for the open door, leaped the fence, and vanished in the night.

CHAPTER II.

HACKALIAH SNICK.

SIM PUGSLEY had not gone twenty steps down the dark lane on which his paternal domicile was located when he came into collision with some object moving with rapidity in the opposite direction to himself.

That other object was a boy, and that boy's skull came in contact with the corresponding portion of Sim's anatomy with a crash like the bursting of a bomb.

A million assorted stars danced before Master Pugsley's eyes, and he tumbled backward into the ditch which drained the road.

The other boy, upset by the violence of the concussion, fell against a light picket-fence which defended the dooryard of a house fronting on the lane.

The fence gave way with a crash, and he rolled on the grass, where a large and savage watchdog pounced upon him, and began to make a meal off his leg.

"Help! Take him off!" yelled the victim.

"Help! Pull me out!" howled Sim.

"I'm being eat up!" screamed the youth in the grass.

"I'm being drownded!" shrieked Master Pugsley.

"Bow-wow-wow!" remarked the dog.

And by way of varying his diet he commenced on his victim's other leg.

There is an old truism to the effect that even a worm will turn.

So it was with the young man in the grass.

Nerved with the energy of despair, he grabbed a big stone on which his hand happened to light, and began pounding his assailant on the head with it.

The cannibalistic canine was evidently astonished.

He let go of his prey at the first blow, and at the second retreated, growling.

This gave the youth a chance to gain his feet, which he was not slow to profit by.

And once on his feet he beat a hasty retreat.

The dog, having recovered from his amazement, bounded after him, and halting in the middle of the road, the boy hurled the stone, which he still retained, at his pursuer.

It missed him and struck his master, who had just come out of the house to ascertain what all the noise was about, in the stomach.

The missile knocked the man back, till he tripped over the curb of a well and fell in with a loud splash.

"Ho, ho!" remarked the cause of his overthrow, in an accent of satisfaction; "you've gone where the dog won't bite you, anyhow."

"And I'll be there soon, too," said a faint voice from the ditch beside the speaker.

"Ge-whitaker!" exclaimed the other, jumping three feet in the air, "what's that?"

"It's me," responded the voice, dolefully.

"Those accent!" exclaimed the boy, tragically.

"Are mine."

"My friend?"

"Sim Pugsley."

"Great powers above! And has it come to this?"

"It'll come to worse soon," said Sim, impatiently. "So lend me a hand, Hack Snick, and haul me out!"

The boy addressed by the above cacophonous cognomen complied, and with his assistance Sim gained a footing on the road.

"But how did you get in there, Puggy, old fellow?" inquired Hack Snick, anxiously, as he scraped the black mud from his friend.

"That's a pretty question for you to ask."

"Why is it?"

"Because it is."

"I fail to see why."

"You must be blind, then. Why, you knocked me there yourself."

"I knocked you there?"

"You did."

"Sim Pugsley."

"Hackaliah Snick."

"You're a friend of mine?"

"Nobody would think so from the way you treat me."

"And I don't want to call you a liar."

"Maybe you know why," observed Sim, significantly.

"But circumstances constrain me to remark that you are a stranger to the truth."

"What do you mean by that?"

"I mean that it was you that ran against me and sent me to grass in that yard."

"And I say it was you that upset me into the ditch."

"Well," remarked Hack Snick, calmly, "there's one way to settle it, you know. Peel."

"Peel it is."

And both began to shell off their jackets.

Before they were stripped, however, the outcries of the man in the well summoned some people from the house with lanterns.

"It won't do for us to be caught," said Sim. "Let's postone."

"'Tis well, my noble duke," responded Hack. "To be continued in our next, as it were."

And reinvesting themselves with their jackets as they went, they hurried off.

"But what fetches you out at this time of night?" asked Sim, as they trotted along.

"I ran out."

"So did I."

"What for?"

"To save my hide a tanning."

"By crickey! Same here."

"Was your governor going to tan you?"

"Oh, wasn't he just!"

"What for?"

"For doing nothing."

"My case, exact."

"Then, old pard, let us shake."

And stopping in the middle of the road, Hack gravely shook his friend's hand.

He then explained that, having been occupied all the afternoon making dipsies for his fishing lines, he had been unable to chop the wood required to prepare supper for the Snick household.

Consequently, when Mr. Snick returned from work he had found no supper ready, and being a very unreasonable man, he had flown into the most outrageous passion.

So, instead of the supper he expected, when he condescended to seek the house, Hack had been greeted with a rawhide.

Not having an appetite for that species of delicacy, he had made his escape as soon as he could.

"And where were you going?" asked Sim.

"I was looking for Gid."

"Wasn't he home?"

"I gave the signal and he responded not."

"He must be at the cave, then."

"Just so."

"Then forward to the cavern."

CHAPTER III.

GIDEON GOBLE.

THE village of Suckerville boasted a Main Street, which was crossed by half a dozen elm-shaded lanes, like the one on which Sim Pugsley lived.

Passing down the street, which at this hour was deserted, the boys soon found themselves outside of the hamlet.

They halted before the tumble-down walls of a ruined hut, upon which the moon, which was just rising over the hills behind them, cast a fantastic light.

There Hack gave a long, mournful whistle.

What sounded like some one thumping on a plank with a stone was heard from within the crumbling walls almost instantly.

Hack then proceeded to produce a species of insane imitation of the hooting of an owl.

Three distinct thumps replied.

"He's there," remarked Sim; "let's go in."

Passing through the shattered doorway they found themselves in a space overgrown with brush and weeds.

Pushing through these they stopped close to the rear wall of the hut, and Hack stamped three times.

The hollow sound his heel evoked announced that he was kicking a plank trap-door.

At the third blow there was a creaking sound, and a square patch of dim light appeared at the two boys' feet.

"Who comes there?" asked a voice.

"Weary wayfarers," responded Hack.

"You travel late."

"Because our journey is a long one."

"And its end is?"

"Liberty or death!" said Hack and Sim together.

At this response the trap was thrown wide open, and a pug-nosed boy was revealed in the opening beneath, holding a lantern with a lighted candle in it.

"All right, shipmates," he said; "I knew it was you."

"Then why didn't you let us in before?" demanded Sim.

"Discipline, messmate, discipline. You know our oath."

"Of course I do. But I don't see the use of going through all this rigmarole of watchwords and countersigns."

"You don't?"

"No, I don't."

"Well, I do."

"I'd like to know what it is, then?"

"Sho!" interrupted Hack. "Haven't you got any savey at all?"

"I've got as much as you, any day."

"Well, you ought to know, then, that there's no use of our having a cave if we don't have a password to get into it. Did you ever read about one without, say?"

"I never thought of that," said Sim. "I take it all back."

While speaking the boys had dropped into the excavation which the trap covered, and that rude structure of plank had been again lowered.

The place in which they were was a curious one.

It had originally been the cellar of the hut, whose ruins now stood above it, and was about ten feet square and five feet high.

The walls were hung with a couple of tattered old blankets, a few rabbit, muskrat and polecat-skins, and a couple of worn-out buffalo-robes.

From the ceiling, or, rather, the rude beams which supported the crumbling floor of the hut, depended some bows and arrows, and three ancient and rusty guns, of the sort more dangerous to the shooter than to the shot at, were stacked in a corner.

The rest of the furniture consisted of a few big stones, which answered for seats, a couple of battered knapsacks and some dilapidated bridles, and other articles of harness, which looked as if they had been fished out of some horsepond after they had been thrown away as useless.

A fire smouldered in the centre of this strange den, and there was enough of smoke in the place to cure a thousand hams by.

The density of the atmosphere produced, on the part of our friend, Simeon Walsingham Pugsley, a violent fit of coughing.

"Oh, say, fellers, why can't we have the door open?" he wheezed.

"Have the door open?" exclaimed Hack. "Who ever heard of having the door of a cave open? Did you ever read anything like that?"

"Well, no; that's so, I never did. I take it all back."

"What in thunder does he want the door open for?" demanded Gid, in great disgust.

"It's on account of the smoke," gasped Sim.

"The smoke? What smoke?"

"Why, this here smoke; the place is full of it."

"Of course it is, messmate," said Gid, proudly. "Did you ever read of a cave that wasn't full of smoke?"

"Yes, but this chokes me."

"Well, everybody gets choked in a cave, anyhow; besides, you've got to get used to it sooner or later, and you might as well begin now."

"Oh, he's always growling about something," interposed Hack. "Don't mind him. Puggy always was a crank, you know."

"Look here, Hackaliah Snick," exclaimed Sim, indignantly; "I want you to understand one thing."

"What's that?"

"Do you know my name?"

"Of course I do."

"What is it?"

"Oh, come now, Puggy, old boy, what are you giving us?"

"I'll be giving you something you don't want, if you call me out of my name again!"

"Oh, come now, Pug," interposed Gid, soothingly, "what crank's got into you now?"

"Gid Goble, this ain't any of your funeral. I just want you to shut up."

"Well, what are you making all this row about?" demanded Gid. "You're worse than a third mate with a skin full of stingaree."

"Well, I wan't one thing understood——"

"You said that before," interrupted Hack.

"Did I?"

"Yes, you did."

"Well, now, I'll say it behind, and see whether it'll suit you that way."

"But what is it you want understood, messmate?" inquired Gid, with much solicitude.

"Two things."

"You said only one a minute ago."

"Did I?"

"Of course you did."

"Well, there ain't anything mean about me, so I'll give you two for good measure."

"But you haven't given them to us yet."

"Well, if you'll only hold your jaw for a minute I will."

"Steer your course, messmate."

"In the first place, then, my name ain't Pug."

"What is it, then, Puggy?"

"And it ain't Puggy, either."

"Gewhittaker! you don't mean to say you've had it changed by act of Congress?"

"Never you mind."

"All right, Pug; we won't, then; say nothing and call it square."

"I'll only say one thing more. I was christened Simeon Walsingham Pugsley, and I'm not a crank."

"Smash my binnacle if he ain't ashamed of his own name," said Gid to Hackaliah, in a low voice.

"Well, if he is," responded Hack, in the same guarded tone, "we'll call him Piggy; maybe he'll like that better."

"It would fit him better too, I guess," said Gid—"that is, about mess time."

"What job are you fellows putting up there?" suspiciously demanded Sim, who had witnessed, without catching the purport of the preceding colloquy.

"Oh, nothing," responded Gid.

"You're mighty secret about it, any way. Was it anything about me?"

"Well, the fact of the matter is, Pug, old pal," explained Gid, "that Hack here was just saying that he really thought you didn't like to be called Puggy."

"Well, I don't."

"And do you really mean to say, Pug, that you don't like to be called Puggy?"

"And have you the cheek to assert, Puggy, that you don't like to be called Pug?" added Hack.

"Well, cheek or no cheek, I say it."

"Perhaps," said both together, "you object to being called a crank?"

"I do."

"Then hereafter we'll never call you anything else but 'Puggy, the Crank.'"

"You will, will you?"

"Yes, we will."

"You're sure of it?"

"Dead sure."

"Then go ahead and do it."

"We intend to, thank you."

"Don't mention it. You're quite welcome. Only as you've christened me, I don't think it's out of the way for me to baptize you."

"Baptize away."

"Then," exclaimed Sim, snatching up a tin pail full of water from beside the fire, "I christen you a pair of regular duffers, and that's the end of it."

And he dashed the contents of the pail over them, flapped his arms against his sides, and executed a favorite performance of his, which was a realistic imitation of the crow of a triumphant rooster.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MYSTIC THREE OF SUCKERVILLE.

HAVING thus reasserted himself, Sim wiped the tears from his eyes, sneezed until his head was almost jerked from his shoulders, and then sat down on a stone exhausted.

As he did so, a book bound in saffron-colored paper dropped from his pocket.

At sight of the fallen object the eyes of his two companions assumed the dimensions of breakfast-saucers.

"What's that?" they exclaimed, simultaneously.

"Oh, nothing," responded Sim, in accents of disdainful pride, picking up the volume as he spoke, "only a new dime-novel I got to-day."

"Why, I got one, too," exclaimed Gid.

"And so did I," added Hack.

"What is yours?" demanded Sim.

"Mine," responded Gid, producing from his pocket a volume of similar appearance to the first, and smacking his lips as he read the title, as if the words tasted good—"mine's 'Pirate Pete, the Pitiless; Or, The Crimson Curse of the Caribbean.'"

"Oh, bones!" ejaculated Sim, "but that must be a rattler."

"Well, I should smile."

"Will you let me have it when you get through, Gid?"

"Cert, shipmate. But what one did you get?"

"Mine's 'Moccasin Mike, the Merciless; Or, The Blind Trapper's Terrible Vow of Blood.'"

"Great rattlesnakes!" exclaimed Hack, quivering with excitement, "only let me look at the cover, will you? That's a good fellow, Puggy."

"Not much."

"But why not?"

"Do you suppose I'm goin' to let you read all the good out of it before I've got a chance at it, say?"

"Well, I ain't going to eat it, am I?"

"No, but you'd be certain to devour it."

"Oh, stow that, messmates," interrupted Gid, "and let's see what Hack's brought aboard."

Hackaliah, who had been fidgeting around like a monkey on a hot stove, brisked up visibly at this remark.

His features, however, assumed an air of proud disdain.

"Hah!" he said, rising, "I guess you fellows will have enough to do to read your own books, without bothering about mine. I'll go home and read it before I go to bed."

"Oh, that ain't fair, Hack," interposed Sim. "We told you what ours were."

"Well, that's all I wanted to know."

And he moved toward the trap.

A gleam of desperation came into the eyes of his companions.

With a significant glance at one another, they bounded forward and seized him by the shoulders.

Hack, who had not intended to go, but only wished to tantalize them, was too much overcome by astonishment at this sudden move to offer any resistance to it.

He was forced upon his knees, and held there while Gid Goble said, solemnly:

"Messmate, do you remember where you are?"

"Of course I do."

"You are in the cave of the Devastators."

"Yes."

"The Mystic Three of Suckerville."

"I am."

"You are one of us."

"I never said I wasn't."

"Then what do you mean, playing us this way?"

"What way?"

"Do you remember the oath you swore?"

"I haven't lost my memory yet, I guess."

"You act like it."

"How so?"

"Everything we got we were, according to our compact signed in blood, to share with one another."

"Just so."

"And when the time came, to stand by one another through fire and water, even if we had to wade in gore."

"Knee-deep," added Sim.

"Yes, or over our heads," said Gid.

"Well, what of it?" demanded Hack. "Have you got any gore about for me to swim in?"

"We may have before you expect it; mind that. Are you true to your oath, Hackaliah Snick?"

"I mean to be."

"Then show up that there book, or you may never leave the cavern alive."

"Great Scott! is that all you want?" said Hack. "Why didn't you say it before? I was only fooling you."

"Sit down, then, and fork it out."

Hackaliah reseated himself, and produced from his pocket a book with a crimson paper-cover.

His companions' eyes snapped with anticipation.

"Here it is," he said, gripping the volume as a miser grips his gold.

"What do you call it?"

There was a tinge of pride in Hack's voice as he read:

"'Scorpion Sam, the Slaughterer; Or, The Ruffian Road-Agent of Tarantula Pass.'"

"Well, stave my quarter-boats, but that's a busting good title."

"Geewhillikin's! it's a whooper, that is."

"I knew it would paralyze you," observed Hack, complacently.

"There's only one trouble about them kind of yarns," said Gid, disparagingly. "They're all good enough in their way, but there ain't any pirates into 'em."

"Well, what of it?" retorted Hack. "This fellow is a robber and a highwayman and a murderer, ain't he?"

"Yes."

"Well, what's the difference, then?"

"Oh, bother your robbers and pirates," interrupted Sim. "I don't believe in killing anything but Injuns."

"You're a gay old scalp-hunter, you are," said Gid, scornfully. "You're a regular terror of the plains."

"Well, you're a high old clamboat pirate. You think you'd make a gay buccaneer, don't you?"

"Maybe I would."

"With a long, low, rakish black schooner, eh?"

"Never you mind."

"And a brass long-tom stuck up in the middle."

"Oh, ho! stuck up! middle! That's all you know about a ship, is it?"

"Well, that's all I want to know now."

"Oh, shut up!" broke in Hack, impatiently. "You fellers make me sick with your pirates and Indians."

"Poor ickle sing," said Sim, soothingly. "Does it feel sick in its 'ittle stomach?"

"Not half as sick as you'd be if you were to meet an Injun," responded Hack, by no means pleased to have baby-talk addressed to him. "What would you do, anyhow, Pug, if a blood-besmeared red devil was to come at you now, hungering for your scalp?"

"Do!" repeated Gid; "why, he'd top his boom and sail large."

"Scratch gravel against time," added Hack.

"Run to leeward."

"Cut his sticks."

"Clap on all canvas."

"And make double-quick for the nearest rat-hole."

Sim Pugsley listened to these sarcasms with growing anger. His naturally good-humored face grew dark, and he finally said:

"Well, are you fellows most through yet?"

"Why?" demanded Snick.

"Oh, nothing. Only if I am scared of an Injun, I want to show you that I'm not afraid of you!"

"What do you mean by that?"

"I mean put up."

And he squared off in an attitude of boxing.

"Put up?" repeated Hack.

"Or shut up."

"And suppose I don't want to do either?"

"Then I'll have to make you."

And to Hackaliah Snick's extreme surprise, Sim dealt him a playful tap on the nose that started the claret flowing.

Gid Goble, who was by far the most serious and responsible of the Mystic Three of Suckerville, observed this proceeding without the least manifestation of surprise.

In fact, such occurrences were by no means uncommon among the Mystic Three, and Gid had a philosophic habit of letting them settle themselves without any interference from him.

On the present occasion, however, outside interference put an end to the combat almost as it began.

For just as Sim warded the blow which Hack returned for his, there came a rumbling overhead, followed by a tremendous crash!

And amid a dense cloud of dust, and a shower of stones and dirt, the roof of the cavern caved in!

A wandering jackass, strolling about and cropping the grass in the moonlight, had strayed, attracted by the succulent thistles that throve there, into the inclosure, and the rotten floor of the hut had given way under him.

Now, amid the mass of rubbish and in a suffocating cloud of dust, the Mystic Three of Suckerville and the unlucky quadruped struggled together.

The boys, however, managed to scramble out, at the expense of a few scratches, and made for their respective homes.

As they departed, the sky grew red behind them with the glare of a conflagration.

The fire in the cavern had ignited the wood and other combustibles about, and what was left of the old hut was blazing merrily away, with the wretched ass roasting in its midst, sending forth bray after bray of anguish, which the night-wind bore along like the wail of some lost soul.

CHAPTER V.

A CORONER'S INQUEST.

NEXT day Suckerville was wild with excitement. The fire and the terrible noises which accompanied it had aroused every one in the village, and when daylight came men, women, and children assembled to speculate on the extraordinary event.

The ruined cabin had the reputation of being haunted, and some of the older villagers held the theory that the evil one had turned up the night before and carried the ghost off in a tempest of flame.

The younger members of the community took a more realistic view of the matter, and organized a party to investigate it.

As the readers may imagine, there were three persons who were not absent on that occasion.

Having reached their homes by devious ways the night before, Gid Goble, Hackaliah Snick and Simeon Walsingham Pugsley had sneaked in and gone to bed.

They were decidedly ill at ease as to what the result of their night's adventure would be.

Consequently, when the party was made up to visit the ruins, visions of discovery and of punishment loomed up before them.

"If they ever find out about the cave," said Hack, "we'll have the life thrashed out of us."

"Oh, Moses!" groaned Sim, who already saw a vivid picture of a woodshed and an angry father with a rawhide, "whatever will we do?"

"I know what I'm going to do, messmates," said Gid Goble.

"What?" demanded both together.

"I'm going to stick to that crowd."

"But what good will that be?"

"Well, I'll know what they find out, so I won't be taken unawares."

"There's darned little comfort in that, as I can see."

"We'll know what's going to happen to us, anyhow, won't we?"

"What of that?"

"Everything. When you're driving in on a lee shore, messmates, it never does any harm to know it, 'cause then you can maybe help yourself."

This bit of philosophy was not without its effect, and when the investigating party got under way, The Mystic Three formed part of it.

The old hut was soon reached, and a search of the smoldering ruins commenced.

"Great snakes!" suddenly exclaimed one of the searchers, "here's some bones."

"They've found the jackass," groaned Sim. "I knew they would."

"And here's three guns," cried another.

"Now we are in for it," gasped Hack.

"Hold on a bit," admonished Gid. "They haven't found who owns 'em yet."

Nor did they.

With the exception of the guns and the bones of the jackass, the fire had consumed all the other contents of the secret meeting-place of The Mystic Three.

Thanks to the fire, even the bones were so cracked and shapeless as to leave no clue to the identity of the animal to which they belonged.

Now, for some time past the neighborhood of Suckerville had suffered severely from the depredations of some unknown marauders, who had been supposed to be tramps.

In the presence of the bones and the guns the investigating party struck upon a new theory.

That was that the old hut had been the hiding-place of some strange robber, and that it had accidentally taken fire the night before, and burned him up.

"The darned skunk," said one, "he deserved it."

"He did that," observed another. "But what are we going to do with them there bones?"

"Set a inquest over 'em first, an' then plant 'em."

"That's the ticket. Let's have a inquest."

"What in thunder are they about now?" asked Gid, as the bones were gathered together in a sack.

"They're going to hold an inquest," replied Sim, grinning.

"An inquest over a roasted jackass?"

"So it seems."

"Well, by gum! This is a lark!"

And so it was.

The bones were carefully carried to the village tavern, and there spread out on a table.

Then a jury was selected, the coroner summoned, and an inquest held.

Everybody who had ever had anything stolen, from a nest of hen's eggs up to a horse and wagon, appeared to give evidence against the remains of the poor jackass.

Enough crimes were laid to their share to send a man to state prison for a hundred years at least.

When the evidence was all in, the jury retired to deliberate.

In the course of a couple of hours they returned and gravely rendered a verdict that "The diseased came to his death by a visitation of God, and because the blamed rascal deserved it."

A hard-headed, little old man, who had strolled in while the jury were in retirement, now pushed forward.

"Air you folks all natural-born idiots?" he demanded, sharply.

"Which you will perhaps explain the meaning of them animadversions, Mister Grimes," said the coroner—a fat, pompous man, who kept the village grocery.

"Explain 'em!" said Mr. Grimes. "Why, they ought to explain themselves."

"But they don't, sir, as you may perceive."

"So it seems. Now what have you been doin', for instance?"

"We've been holdin' an inkvitch."

"An inquest on what?"

"On the darndest thief that ever wasn't hung."

"Haw! haw! haw!" laughed Mr. Grimes.

"Well, blame my cats but the old fool must be crazy," said the coroner.

"He! he! he! So you call them the bones of a thief, do you?"

"Yes, I do."

"And so does the jury, eh?"

"It does."

"Well, all I've got to say is that you and the jury are a set of squashes."

"A set of squashes!"

"Yes, sir-ree. And of darned soft one's, too."

"Mr. Grimes, sir," said the coroner, with dignity, "do you weigh the responsibility of them words?"

"Of course I do."

"They're contempt, sir. Contempt of court."

"No they ain't. They're contempt of a lot of mush heads that hold an inquest over the bones of my old jackass, that's what they are."

"Your old jackass?"

"Yes, my old jackass. I'd know 'em among a thousand."

"You would?"

"And, besides, when I was coming from town, I found his skull some boys had fished out of the fire."

"I don't believe it."

"You don't?"

"No, I don't. You want to bring contempt on this court, Mister Grimes."

"Oh, no, I don't. I couldn't."

"Why couldn't you?"

"Because it has got all the contempt it could have already."

And Mr. Grimes here laughed again as if he had learned to laugh from his dead jackass.

Now, a coroner is only a human being, and a country coroner is a very human one indeed.

Mr. Sands was no exception to the rule, and this aggravating laugh of Mr. Grimes's drove him frantic.

To make matters worse, there was an old feud between him and the owner of "the deceased," about which he was very sore.

So it was in no very mild tone that he sharply said:

"Mister Grimes, shut up."

"And what will I shut up for?" snapped Mr. Grimes.

"Because I say so."

"Oh, you say so."

"I do."

"Mr. Sands," said the hard-headed old man, waxing wroth, "are you talking to me?"

"I am."

"Then take your hat off when you speak to a gentleman."

And Mr. Grimes tipped the hat from the coroner's head.

At this insult the eyes of the grocer flashed fire.

All the hatred he had been nursing for months, broke out, and he deal Mr. Grimes a box on the ear which knocked him against the table where the jackass's bones reposed.

Grabbing one, Mr. Grimes recovered himself and jumped forward.

In a second more the hard-headed old man and the coroner were banging away at one another with an energy which showed that their souls were in the work.

Some of the jurymen tried to separate them, and as all hands had been refreshing themselves liberally with Medford rum during the inquest, a general fight was the consequence.

The bones of the subject of inquest made excellent weapons, and were liberally used as such.

By the time that the fright was over, all that was left of the furniture in the room was a select assortment of kindling-wood.

The combatants themselves would have made an admirable regiment of scarecrows; and altogether, as Hack remarked, it was a "bang up affair."

The chief sufferer by it was the proprietor of the tavern, and as he viewed the wreck of his property, he swore a solemn oath of vengeance!

"It's all along of that blamed jackass," he said. "And bust my crust if I don't find out who put it there, and let them look out then, that's all."

"But how are you going to find out?" asked some one.

"You let me alone. I have my suspicions, and don't you forget it."

And he cast a meaning glance at the Mystic Three, who were poking around the scene of desolation, chuckling at the late fun.

At this glance they felt their hearts stop beating for a minute.

Then, by one common impulse, they stole silently away.

CHAPTER VI.

A COUNCIL OF WAR.

"WE'RE in for it now, shipmates," said Gid Goble, behind the haystack, where they gathered to hold a council of war after the fight. "This time we will catch it, sure."

"Why?" asked Sim.

"Because now they know it wasn't a man in the cave, don't they?"

"Yes."

"And jackasses don't use guns."

"I never heard of four-legged ones doing it."

"Then they'll know that there was somebody else there, won't they?"

"That's so."

"And who do they blame for everything that goes wrong in Suckerville?"

"Us," responded Hack and Sim, promptly.

"Just so. Then who will they blame for this?"

"Us, I suppose," was the gloomy reply.

"And what will happen?"

"I can sort of feel it happening already," said Sim, dolefully rubbing a portion of his anatomy, with which the paternal rawhide was already familiar.

"Besides," remarked Hack, "if I'm not stone-blind, we're as good as found out already."

"You mean old Soker?" said Gid.

"Yes."

"I noticed the way he looked at us."

"And so did I."

"And maybe I didn't," added Sim. "Why, he looked clean through me."

"It's a clear case of go," groaned Hack. "Whatever are we to do?"

"There's only one thing I can see," observed Gid, gloomily.

"What's that?"

"To make a move."

"Where to?"

"I don't know. Anywhere away from here. If there was only a river around now, we might get out to sea."

"What in? a wash-tub?" asked Hack, sarcastically.

"The plains are awful far off," said Sim. "But we may make a break for them."

"And walk there, I s'pose?" sneered Hack.

"Well, we can't very well swim there, can we?"

"We might, if we tried hard."

"You might, you mean," said Gideon Goble. "As for me, I long for a life on the ocean wave. No shallow water for me."

"See here, Gid."

"See what?"

"Do you know anything about the geography of your native land."

"Well, I didn't stand on the dunce-block, anyway."

"What do you mean by that?"

"Never mind what I mean; you know who did."

"Gid Goble, I've a good mind to punch your head."

"That's just what's the matter with you."

"What's just what's the matter with me?"

"You've always got a good mind, and you never get any further than that."

"Yes," said Hack, "Sim is bully on the fight when there's no fightin' to be done."

"I'm good enough to lick you, anyway."

"Oh, you are, are you?"

"Just try me."

"I'm your huckleberry. Don't wait till you get gray, now."

Sim launched himself upon Hack, as if he had been shot out of a gun.

Hack dodged him so effectually that he tumbled in a heap upon the ground.

Unfortunately, the spot in which he fell was at that moment occupied by an old sow, whose latest litter were slumbering about her."

The little pigs scattered, squeaking shrilly, while the porcine mother sprang up and made a savage snap at Sim's nether extremities, which narrowly missed reducing his left leg into mincemeat.

She followed this up by charging the entire party.

Hackaliah was shot into a neighboring horsepond, where he landed with his head in the mud, as if he had been planted by a pile-driver, and stuck, kicking wildly.

Gid made a leap to clear the fence, and found himself suspended by the seat of his pants, which caught on a sharp-pointed post.

Sim rolled over and over in the road, howling wildly for help.

"I'm killed," he shouted. "Lord save me! my backbone's broke in half!"

"Darn your backbone!" yelled Gid. "Help me down, somebody. My heart's blood is running out of my ears."

"Save me first," spluttered Hack. "I'm being smothered. Pull me out, I say."

"What a selfish beast you are!" yelled Gid. "Do you ever think of anybody but yourself, say?"

"You're a nice one to call anybody selfish. You never think of yourself, do you?"

"Never."

"What, never?"

"Well, hardly ever."

At this shameless repetition of a threadbare Pinafore joke, even the sow became disgusted, and with her progeny trotted down the road, leaving our heroes to get out of the scrape as best they might.

Its effect on Sim was perfectly miraculous.

He jumped up as if a serpent had stung him, and cried:

"Say that again, and I'll club your head off."

"Don't, please," pleaded Gid. "I won't."

"What, never?"

"Never no more."

"Then, for this once, I forgive you."

"G-o-o-s-h," spluttered Hack, half suffocated with the mud and slime, "pull me out, will you, before I join the angels."

"It would be a pity to spoil that chance for you," said Sim. "It's the only one you're ever likely to have."

"I resign it, only help me up."

"What are you rolling about in that ditch for?"

"What do you suppose?"

"I don't know."

"Why, because I can't help it."

"That's a good reason, anyhow."

"Just pull me out and I'll show you, mighty quick."

Sim seized his unfortunate companion by the leg and dragged him into the road, besmeared with mud from his heir to his heels.

Then they extricated Gid from his predicament, and he crawled to the road, his face crimson with rage, and feeling as if all the blood in his body had run down into his head.

"You're a nice pair of duffers, you are" he exclaimed.

"Oh, we are, are we?"

"Yes, you are."

"What for?"

"Leaving me in such a fix as that."

"Why didn't you help Hack out?"

"How in thunder could I help anybody?"

"You didn't try."

"Sim Pugsley, you'd better shut up, before I bust your crust."

"Oh, indeed, wade right in, Mr. Goble; I'm your mince pie, I am."

"I'd eat you, only it might poison me."

Another conflict was imminent, when the sound of wheels approaching from the direction of the village was plainly heard.

The boys climbed the fence with much alacrity, and crouched down behind it until the wagon had passed.

"Did you see that?" said Sim. "That was Coroner Sands and Constable Bulger."

"Yes, and they're going right down to father's," responded Hack.

"What on airth shall we do?"

"We've got to git."

"What, to-night?"

"Do you want to stay here and get your hide tanned off?"

"Mine's pretty near tanned off now," said Sim, ruefully. "I don't know as I could be much worse."

"I tell you, messmates," remarked Gid, with an oracular air, "we must assert our independence and strike for liberty."

"Or death," added Sim.

"I'm ready," said Hack, boldly.

"And so am I," responded Sim.

"Then we are agreed."

"We are."

"One for all and all for one. Remember the oath you have taken, messmates."

"We won't forget it."

"We stick together through thick and thin."

"Like sealing-wax."

"Or porous plasters."

"But what can we do?"

"Why, start for the plains," replied Hackaliah.

"Now, see here," broke in Gid, "I'm ready to start right off; but don't give me any taffy about the plains."

"Why not?"

"Because we don't want to go there."

"Yes, we do."

"Well, you may."

"We do, I tell you."

"But I don't."

"Where else could we go, then?"

"Why, to the Spanish Main, or the Indian Ocean, where we could revel in wealth, and become the terrors of the sea."

"You're too fresh, Gid, for an old salt."

"I am, am I?"

"Yes, you are, by a large majority."

"What do you want to do, then?"

"To go where the red man chases the bounding buffalo, the home of the grizzly bear and the prong-horn."

"You mean where the stage-coaches, loaded with bullion, come down from the mines."

"No, I don't. I don't want any of your stage-coaches. Do you intend to stand by our agreement?"

"Of course, I do."

"Well, majority rules, don't it?"

"I suppose so."

"That's all right, then," continued Sim. "Hack and I want to go West—you want to go to sea; we're the majority, so you'll have to cave in."

"Oh, I will, will I?"

"Remember your oath."

"That's so. I guess I'll have to give it up."

"You'd better."

"Yes," put in Hack, "you'll find lakes out there as big as the ocean, nearly. 'The Pirate of the Lakes' wouldn't sound bad, would it?"

"Shiver my main-boom! I never thought of that before. It's quite a novelty."

"Then we're all agreed," said Sim. "We'll be off to-night. Now, what must we take?"

"Some grub, and all the weapons we can get," responded Gid.

"Yes, and we'll want some blankets."

"Each of us can bring one."

"That's so. Say, fellers, the old man has got a whole keg of powder in the barn."

"Can you scoop it in?"

"Of course, I can."

"Then we're fixed."

"Well, we will be if we have to carry all that plunder."

"We won't carry it."

"Are you going to make it walk?"

"Don't be an idiot, please."

"But how are you going to fix it?"

"Easy enough."

"Well, how?"

"Why, old Grimes's mare is running loose in the big pasture—we'll take her."

"That is, if she'll let us."

"I guess we can persuade her. Are you agreed?"

"First-rate."

"Just the thing."

"Then it's a bargain."

"What time will we start?"

"We can get everything ready by eight o'clock, can't we?"

"Cert."

"And meet down by the mill-dam?"

"Yes," said Sim. "I'll fetch the mare, and you fellows can bring all your stuff down there."

"It's a go."

And shaking hands on the compact, The Mystic Three stole away in the direction of their various homes.

The God of Day was pulling down the blinds in the western sky, and evening was consequently descending on the pleasant little town of Suckerville.

People who had anything to eat were going home to eat it, and those who had not were wishing they had, and hating the others heartily.

From this fact, in connection with the hour, the reader may infer that it was supper-time.

But three proud spirits in that pastoral hamlet spurned the luxurious allurements of the table where the odorous fried pork and apples, and the seductive but dyspeptic hot biscuit sent up an incense which made even the hungry dog in the back yard howl piteously. And strange to say, these Spartan heroes were boys. Boys whom the prophetic reader knows to be Simeon Walsingham Pugsley, Hackaliah Snick and Gideon Goble.

They met at the appointed spot, and after the interchange of very few words started due west, driving a sway-backed old mare, loaded down with a burden which would have made an elephant sick, before them.

[To be continued.]

HANDLING A GUN.

SHOOTING on the wing is a mechanical art, like billiard-playing, boxing or fencing. There will, of course, be degrees of excellence; but any one with the full use of his faculties and the ambition necessary to success in anything can acquire it. The secret lies "in the hand becoming subservient to the eye." The two must be connected by electricity. The eye is never at fault; if it were, there would be little hope of improvement; but any one may improve the quickness of the muscles. Look at the expertness of professional card-players and conjurers in the art of manipulation. The same practice applied to the gun will make the brilliant shot. One often hears it said, "To be a good shot requires a quick eye." It matters not how quick the eye is, unless the muscles are educated to act in unison with it. Every one can see quick enough. Let out a bird from a trap before five hundred persons and they will all see it at the same instant, but only the practiced shot can throw up a gun to his shoulder with accurate aim and a simultaneously pulled trigger before the bird has flown ten feet. Take the adroit fencer or boxer; he sees an opening, and his practiced muscles obey the eye and send the thrust or blow home quicker than the unpracticed eye can follow. Of what use, then, is the sight on a gun? Very little, as is seen by the successful way gunners kill ducks when it is too dark to see the sight or scarcely the barrels. A sportsman should shoot game the same as an Indian shoots his arrow, by looking at the object with both eyes open. It may be done by closing one eye, but there is nothing gained by it. There are two ways of shooting on the wing. One, to throw up the gun to the shoulder and pull the trigger at the same moment, termed "snap shooting." The other, equally good, and better to begin with, and more certain upon the whole, particularly in open shooting, is to follow the bird, and, when covered, fire while the gun is in motion. But when you pull the trigger the other hand has a tendency to stop; that misses the bird. But education will teach it not to stop, the same as we teach both hands a different action while playing on the piano.

A BOY'S PRESENCE OF MIND.

A LITTLE time ago a young man died in Philadelphia who was popularly known, from the swiftness of his running as "Deer." His story is a singular one. A few years since he was a ragged, shrewd lad, peddling newspapers around the railway depots. One day he happened to be on the line of the Pennsylvania railroad, when he saw an engine rushing down the track without any driver or tender. By some chance it had been separated from the cars, and was driving on alone. The boy knew it would meet an express train this side of the station. He had about four minutes' start, and darted down the track after it. The engine was, of course, not at full speed, yet nobody but Deer could have won in such a race. He did win; was cool enough to remember the signal to the station-keeper necessary to have the switch placed so that the engine would be turned on to another track. It was done in just two seconds before the express train went thundering by. Deer, for this service, was granted by the Pennsylvania Railroad corporation a monopoly of the newspaper and book trade on its trunk route, and from this he derived a handsome income. It was to the boy's coolness, as well as to his fleetness, that hundreds of human beings owed their lives.

Through the Heart of Japan.

By COMMODORE AH-LOOK,

Author of "KEEP YOUR BOUNDS," "INVENTIVE BEN," "ORVILLE AND DAN," "THE CHUMS AT HARVARD COLLEGE," ETC.

CHAPTER VI.

A ROMANTIC MEETING WITH THE PRINCESS ICHIJO.

LUCKILY for Johnnie, the flash of the Samurai's sword was reflected in a mirror held by one of the figures of the thirty-third tableau on the opposite side of the hall.

This caused Brackett to raise his head at the very instant the sword descended, and made the *ronin* miss his victim. However, nothing daunted, he faced the young man, and as the latter rose and retreated backward toward the towering figure of the god Ema, Kura savagely re-attacked him and cut the poor fellow down.

As he did so a beautiful young lady in English costume, attended by her two maids, entered the hall, and saw the Samurai raise his weapon to decapitate Johnnie, who had fallen across the bent knees of the god, with his head resting conveniently for the assassin's purpose.

Instead of fainting at the sight, the newcomer, who had witnessed the horrors of the civil war, and seen many a similar act to Kura's perpetrated in Wakamatsu, uttered a cry of alarm, and advanced, followed by her attendants, who screamed:

"*Aie, aie, aie!*" (Stop, stop, stop!)

The *ronin* turned his bloodshot eyes in the direction of the intruders, and throwing all his force into the blow, brought down his sword.

In his blind fury he failed to perceive that Ema's arms overhung the object of his wrath.

To his amazement, his sword was arrested in mid-air, and, instead of falling on Brackett's neck, was caught on the wooden arms of the vermilion-colored deity, the suddenness of the check causing Kura to tumble backward, when the brave girl sprang forward, threw herself upon him, and pinned the fellow to the ground.

At that instant Orv, Dan, and the rest of the party heard her attendants' cries.

They hurried out of the side-room and stood for a moment regarding the scene with speechless horror, while the young lady, believing there was no longer any necessity for her struggle with the *ronin*, released her grasp and permitted him to rise.

Kura sprang to his feet with all the agility of an acrobat, and darting to the entrance, vanished, while the intrepid girl, who was none other than Miss Tofu, or, more correctly speaking, the Princess Ichijo, of Haruko, recognized her adopted cousin and the brothers, and discreetly swooned.

"A miracle!" solemnly exclaimed the *do-jer*, as Johnnie, who had been stunned as well as wounded, slowly rose and grasped the body of the god, in order to steady himself—"a miracle! We must add a thirty-sixth tableau and call it *To-jin sama* (Foreign lord) attacked by a *ronin*. Kuanon, in order to show her power and convert the To-jin, causes Ema to receive the assassin's sword upon his arms."

"Boys!" feebly ejaculated Brackett, who was suffering from a painful and ugly blow on the skull, which bled profusely, "can any of you tell who struck me?"

While Orv, Dan, the bonzes and Don were attending to him, Benke advanced to aid the young lady.

He only remembered Tofu as she used to be, dressed in the native *uwagi nakagi* and *sitagi* (ladies' garments), her pretty, bare feet shod with *tabi* (sandals).

It was, therefore, not strange that he should, in the daintily attired, neatly booted, Americanized girl, fail to recognize his adopted cousin—the vivacious Tofu, whose Japanese charms had made such a hole in his susceptible heart.

After giving her affrightened maids some general directions, and bidding them remove her in to the sideroom, where there was an open window, Doctor Benkei went to the assistance of Johnnie, who, dazed by the force and suddenness of the attack and by his loss of blood, kept repeating, in a sadly comical fashion:

"Say, boys, who struck me? Who struck me, eh?"

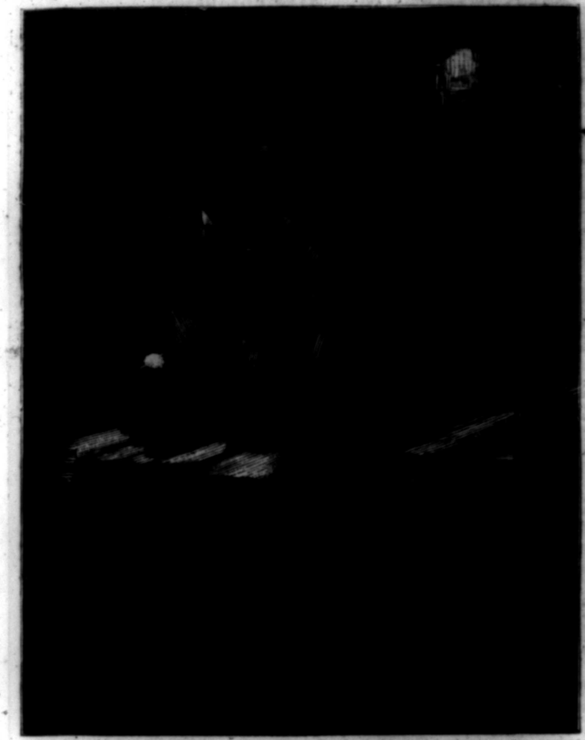
"That *ronin!*" answered Orv, a dozen times. "There, you're all right now, Brack!"

"This is very funny, ain't it?" presently remarked Johnnie, as Benkei artistically closed his wound and applied some strips of Japanese paper to the part. "Will one of you boys pinch me, so that I may be certain that I am not dreaming? Surely that angel did not do this?"

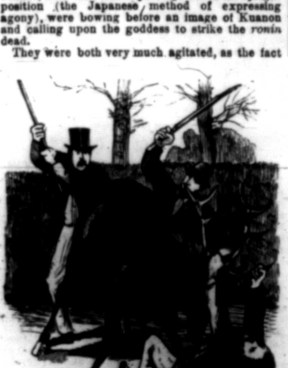
"He's off his head!" said Dan to Orv.

They were kneeling around him, Dan was supporting the poor fellow, Ben dressing his injury, and the brothers watching the operation, while the bonzes, with their hands put together in an upright position (the Japanese method of expressing agony), were bowing before an image of Kuanon and calling upon the goddess to strike the *ronin* dead.

They were both very much agitated, as the fact of having blood spilt in the sacred building would necessitate its being closed for seven days, and consequently be so much dead loss to them, the admission fee to the waxworks being a great source of revenue to the temple.



A MIRACULOUS ESCAPE.—A TRAIN STOPS AT THE VERY VERGE OF AN ABYSS, CAUSED BY THE CARRYING AWAY OF A SECTION OF THE BRIDGE OVER THE MISSISSIPI.— SEE PAGE 151.



A SINGULAR ENCOUNTER WITH A STAG, NEAR LOUGHTON, ENGLAND.— SEE PAGE 151.

After praying to Kuanon they shifted their quarters and appealed to a small statue of a warrior Buddhist, crying:

"*Namu Hachiman, Dai bosatsu!*" (Glory to the Hachiman, the incarnation of the great Buddha!)

The young bonze chanted this in a full tenor voice, while the *do-jer* piped a shrill treble, which sounded very quaintly, and presently attracted the attention of the wounded man, who faintly inquired, in English:

"Is the Reverend Dodger obliging us with a comic song?"

"Hush!" cautioned Orv. "He is praying;" adding, encouragingly: "You're all right now, are you not, chum? You know where you are, don't you?"

"Yes," nodded Brackett; "I—guess I—know where I am. But—where is that young lady?"

"What young lady?" said Benkei.

"Oh, the one who came to my rescue," answered Johnnie. "I know I may be off my head, as Dan calls it, but I swear I saw a girl rush in and grapple with that cuss who was on the floor. It all flashed across my vision in an instant. I believe she was Miss Tofu."

"Yes, the gentleman is perfectly correct in his surmise," exclaimed the pretty girl, who had recovered from her swoon, and noiselessly re-entered the main hall. "I am the Princess Ichijo, once known as Tofu."

Orv and Dan turned and regarded her with amazement, as did Don and the two bonzes, who, upon hearing her voice, had ceased their prayer, while Benkei, prostrating himself upon the mat at her feet, sucked in his breath with amusing rapidity, and performed the Respectful Ceremony.

The princess bit her cherry lips, and smiling on the brothers, held out her hand, exclaiming, in a merry voice:

"Is *this* the way you remember old acquaintances?"

"Upon my word I did not recognize you, princess," said Orville, as he bowed and shook her hand.

"Neither did I," added Dan, following suit, while Ben, who was still in the respectful position, murmured, in Japanese:

"When Ama-terasu (the sun-goddess) appears,
Mortals hide their faces!
What do I hear, the Ugui-so (nightingale)
Singing in the forests of Yamato?
Or is it the voice of Kuanon,
Which melts men's souls?"

Ben expected Miss Tofu to respond in the same high-flown poetical style, forgetting that she had been educated by a practical New England lady.

Glancing sympathetically at Johnnie, who, spite of his wound, was regarding her with undisguised admiration, she laughingly returned, in English:

"There, for goodness sake, Cousin Yuzo, rise. Nowadays no one but *bonzes* and *beggars* go down upon their hands and knees and perform that ridiculous ceremony. The Mikado has decreed bowing on all fours, after the ancient manner, is only to be permitted in religious worship. It is for the gods, not for men. Get up, you dreadful stupid, or I'll never speak to you again."

She was tall for a Japanese lady, was dressed elegantly in full foreign costume, wore six-button French kid gloves, and spoke English like a native, a slight accent giving piquancy to her speech.

But for her large, full, beautiful, snapping, dark eyes and jet-black hair, no one would have taken her for a native lady.

The doctor rose, and offering his hand, said:

"Oh, princess, and I failed to recognize you!"

"Oh, nonsense!" she blushingly answered. "Call me Tofu. We are still cousins."

After they had shaken hands, he introduced her to Don Mortimer, but did not refer to Johnnie, who, advancing and bowing, said:

"Princess, excuse my lack of manners, but I believe I owe you a great debt of gratitude—that you have saved my life. My name is Professor John Brackett. I have long desired to have the happiness of meeting you."

Tofu hid her face in her fan, and glancing archly downward, murmured:

"You honor me, sir. I am a very humble person."

In her agitation she returned to her old Japanese way of speaking.

While they were conversing the *do-jer* summoned his assistants and ordered the latter to replace the blood-stained mats with new ones, and to remove all traces of the affair from the pedestal of the god Ema.

The servant was about to pull the *ronin's* sword out of the wooden arms of the figure, when the *do-jer* whispered:

"Leave that there. It will pay us for all our losses in temporarily closing this temple." Then, turning and bowing to his visitors, he said: "I see through the side-window a number of soldiers advancing toward us. If that lady will retire with her attendants to my private apartments, I will serve her with refreshments, and when you have given audience to the visitors, you can renew your conversation with her."

He knew that the princess, being unmarried, would not care to be seen in public with strangers.

Miss Tofu gratefully accepted his offer.

In Tokio, a lady, attended by her servants, can visit the sights of Asakusa, but is not supposed to speak to gentlemen while there; although, in this case, there was really no impropriety in the princess so doing.

She had come out with a number of the empress's attendants to see the azaleas, but, finding the sun too warm, had determined to take a look at the wonderful waxworks, and had arrived just in time to, by her bravery, save Johnnie's life.

Like most Japanese noblewomen, while highly courageous, gentle and modest, she was, unless aroused, almost timid in her manner.

As she retired to the *do-jer's* reception-room an officer, in French costume, entered the hall, behind him being a file of soldiers, dressed in the same style of military garb.

These halted, in a line, across the entrance, and, at the word of command, brought their rifles down upon the matted floor, when the lieutenant advanced and, saluting Orville, said, in broken English:

"We regrets to learn zat some *ronin* have you chopped in pieces one man."

Orv bowed, and, pointing toward Johnnie, explained the affair in Japanese, and after politely thanking the lieutenant, remarked:

"My friend has been more scared than hurt! The *ronin* has escaped, and we are not afraid that he will renew his attack."

He was cautious not to mention the part played in the matter by the Princess Ichijo, and was anxious to get rid of the presence of the soldiers.

After considerable talk, during which Johnnie said that it was his fault the *ronin* had attacked him, the officer retired, whereupon the old bonze led the way into the private part of the edifice, where they found the princess enjoying a cup of tea.

"You must be faint, Mr. Brackett," she sympathetically observed; "come, sit by me, near the veranda; there is more air here."

This kind speech made Ben green with jealousy, while Johnnie, who had quite recovered from the dizziness resulting from the *ronin's* assault, quickly availed himself of the young lady's kind offer, and received a cup of tea from her fair hands.

He had not failed to notice the doctor's omission to introduce him to the princess, so had no scruples about making Ben mad.

He laughed and chatted with Tofu, as though he had known her all his life and really fell in love—that is, as much as he had ever done with any pretty girl; while the princess, who was of a very romantic turn of mind, thought him just splendid.

He complimented her upon the way in which she spoke English, praised her taste in dress, and over and over again thanked her for her bravery in coming to his rescue.

Johnnie was so taken up with the young lady, and she with him, that neither Orville, Dan, Ben nor Don had a chance to "get in a word edgeways," and were obliged to content themselves with sipping the *do-jer's* tea and in listening to Brackett's comical speeches.

When he had almost exhausted his stock of Japanese words, the princess rose, and bowing, said:

"Now I must return to the garden. I hear my companions calling to me. When we meet, Cousin Benkei, you will kindly not refer to having seen me here, as Her Majesty, the Empress, might not approve of it. You, gentlemen," turning to the chums, "will, of course, pay your respects to my royal mistress. She receives to-morrow. Invitations have been sent you this morning."

"We shall be only too happy to renew our acquaintance with you," said Orv, replying for the others. "We understand. This meeting, being an accidental one, must be considered by us as never having taken place. *Sai-o-nara!*" (Farewell!)

"*Sai-o-nara!*" she cried, motioning to her attendants, who, during the interview, had remained as silent as the waxworks in the hall. "I shall look for you to-morrow at the hour of the Ape. Professor Brackett, I trust you will not feel any ill-effect from your wound. *Sai-o-nara! Sai-o-nara!*"

Benkei followed her to the door in order to privately inform the young lady that he would send her a present of a sewing-machine, which he had ordered to be forwarded to the palace as soon as the importer could obtain his goods.

"Your royal highness," he began, when she held out her hand, and squeezing it gratefully, observed:

"Don't royal highness me, cousin. A million thanks for having so thoughtfully remembered what I asked you to bring me when I wrote that foolish letter from Wakamatsu. The piano is first-class, the sewing-machine runs itself. I have tried the music, and it's lovely; and oh, Yuzo, these five button gloves fit me splendidly."

"Wha-t?" he gasped. "Five-button gloves?"

Ere he could utter another word she had quitted the apartment, while Johnnie, who, like his chums, had overheard what she said, murmured to himself:

"Ben, old man, you haven't a chance. She's mine, my boy."

CHAPTER VII.

BRACKETT DISCOVERS THE MEANING OF AN ANCIENT DIAGRAM.

AFTER the princess had taken her departure, Orville suggested they should go back to the *Yashiki*.

"Not until I have seen the rest of the waxworks," said Johnnie, who was determined not to miss the opportunity.

"See here, Brack," observed Dan, "you ought to keep quiet for the rest of the day. If you don't, your blood will ferment, and you'll have a bad fever."

"Go along," chuckled the wag, in English. "I'm not a keg of beer;" then, turning to the *do-jer*, he said, in Japanese: "Reverend Dodger, will you kindly resume your most interesting description?"

"With pleasure," answered the old man, who was never so happy as when mumbling over the legends connected with the tableaux. "Follow me, *samas*."

He led the way into the side apartment of the main hall, and bowing to the figures, said:

"This is the ninth tableau, and represents an old man, one of the Ho-jo family, writing a prayer-poem."

"How old was he?" gravely asked Ben.

"One hundred and ten years," said the *do-jer*, convincingly. "I have a book containing a full account of this miracle, describing everything that occurred to the patriarch."

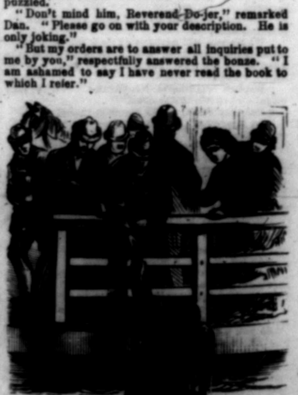
"I want to know," ejaculated Johnnie. "Can you inform me whether he ever had the measles, when he cut his first tooth, and what was his general average at school?"

"Don't!" said Orville, in English. "You'll hurt the *do-jer's* feelings."

The old man scratched his right ear and looked puzzled.

"Don't mind him, Reverend Do-jer," remarked Dan. "Please go on with your description. He is only joking."

"But my orders are to answer all inquiries put to me by you," respectfully answered the bonze. "I am ashamed to say I have never read the book to which I refer."



A HERO THAT DRIVES A TRUCK.—HOW DAVE JORDAN SAVED A LITTLE GIRL.— SEE PAGE 151.

"We will excuse you this time," said Johnnie, speaking like a primary school teacher. "Next."

The *do-jer* bowed, and advancing to the tenth tableau, said:

"This represents a pious damsel who believed in humanity to animals, and worshiped Kuanon. She once saved a crab from being killed by a man, and afterward, when a snake in human shape came to seize her, Kuanon ordered a multitude of crabs to rescue the maiden. Behold them in the act of biting the snake to death."

"What species of crab is that?" asked Brackett.

"I—I—don't know," faltered their guide.

"Dear me, Reverend Dodger, for a man in your position, you appear to be very badly posted. Doctor, can you inform him of the scientific name of those crustace?"

Benkei's lips twitched, and he rolled his eyes as he merrily replied:

"Now you have me, Brack! Those creatures are a cross between a *pagurus* (soldier-crab) and a *maia* (spider-crab) with a strain of scorpion. They are purely imaginary, and never existed save in the artist's eye."

"There," said Johnnie, in a severe tone, to the bonze, "you hear what your countryman says? Those miracles are all in my eye!"

The old gentleman grinned, and, lowering his voice, slyly answered:

"Bless you, my lord, I know that, but do not usually own it, or my superior would dismiss me *jo-jo* (with a kick). I am aware there never were any crabs like those—see, they have tails."

The next tableau showed a disciple of Kuanon, who overcomes a huge serpent with prayer, and the twelfth group represented a diligent copyist of sacred books, amusing children with a puzzle.

"That diagram, written on the tablet held by the copyist, has never been explained," said the *do-jer*, pointing to a sort of cart-wheel design, inscribed on a slab which the principal figure was exhibiting to the life-like group of waxen children.

"You don't say!" murmured Johnnie. "Here, Benkei, read those characters for us."

"They are in *Kami* (god letters), and I cannot decipher them," replied the doctor. "You will see that diagram all over the country. No man can tell what it really means."

"I can read those characters," said the *do-jer*. "They are the Aino signs for numbers, but none of our scholars can make out what the arrangement signifies. I believe it is one of the mysteries of the goddess Kuanon, which the diligent copyist is explaining to the children."

Johnnie's eyes twinkled, and he remarked:

"Read them, Reverend Dodger! If I can't solve this mystery I'm willing to eat this entire group of figures, stuffing and all!"

"You make a rash promise," was the old fellow's grave response. "The *Dai-bozu*, head of our Order, has offered a reward of three *riyos*, in gold, to any one who can solve the mystery of that ancient design. It has puzzled millions of learned men. The sound of the characters are as follows: *Snep* (1), *Top* (2), *Rep* (3), *Mep* (4), *Askinep* (5), *Iwam* (6), *Aruwam* (7), *Tobesham* (8), *Sneoesham* (9), *Wam* 10), *Snepiwam* (11), *Topi-kashima-wam* (12), *Sne-hot* (20), *Wambe-re-hot* (50), *Askine-hot* (100)."

"Pew-eugh!" chuckled the wag. "Why, there's no mystery about the thing! He's teaching them to play tit, tat, toe!"

Orville, Dan and Don laughed at this, which, now that he explained it, was plain enough to them, while Benkei and the bonzes looked puzzled.

"I do not quite understand you," murmured the old fellow; "please be more explicit!"

"Oh, it's as palpable as the nose on your face," laughingly responded Brackett. "Those children have happened in and have disturbed the diligent copyist, who, in order to git rid of them, has drawn a tit-tat-toe diagram on his tablet, and is teaching them the game. See," taking a pencil from his pocket, "there's no mistaking it. He has made a little circle, in which he has written the ancient character meaning one hundred, then has put a big ring round it, and has divided the latter into fourteen spaces, in each of which he has written a number. He is saying:

"'Tit, tat, toe!
My first go!
Three jolly butcher-boys
All in a row!
Stick one up,
Stick one down,
Stick one in the
Old man's crown!'"

"Great Kuanon!" ejaculated the *do-jer*. "You are right, most learned *sama*. We, too, have that game, and call it Uzume's Song—from a verse sung by Uzume, when she danced before the cave in which the sun goddess had hidden herself. "Ah!" sighing, "when I was a child I have many a time played that. We used to say:

"'*Hito, futa, miyo!*
Itsu, muyu, nana!
Ya, koko-no, tari!
Mo-mo, chi, yorod zu!'"

"What does that mean, Ben?" asked Johnnie, as the *do-jer* hid his face in his sleeve and wiped a tear from his aged eyes.

"What he told you," said the doctor. "It is Uzume's Song. We repeat it twice over, and check off a number at every sound. You have unraveled a mystery that has puzzled all Nihon. Of course you will apply for the reward?"

"Oh, no," answered Brackett, in English. "Let the Reverend Dodger get that. He deserves something for having been so civil to us. Come, translate *Hito futa*, et cetera—what does it mean? Is it nonsense, like tit, tat, toe, or one of your poetical conundrums?"

"It is what the goddess of the Countenance of Heavenly Glossiness, Uzume, sang," gravely replied Benkei. "A grand hymn, and is thus translated:

"'Ye gods, behold the cavern doors.
Majesty appears—hurrah!
Our hearts are quite satisfied.
Am I not charming?'

It also means:

"'One, two, three, four, five, six, seven,
Eight, nine, ten, hundred, thousand, ten thousand!'"

"I don't see it is any grander than our tit, tat, toe," chuckled the wag, and addressing the *do-jer*, he informed him that he might claim the reward for deciphering the ancient puzzle.

The old fellow took them aside, out of the hearing of the other bonze, and whispered:

"I thank you, but yonder greedy young fellow, Chokeki, has noted it all down on a paper pocket-handkerchief. If you do not stop him he will, upon being released from his attendance on you, run off to the Dai-bozu and claim the three gold *riyos*. I would like to own such a sum, so that I could invest it, and provide myself with a decent funeral. He is one of those grasping, hungry bonzes, who are always on the lookout for a cash, while I am as poor as a temple-lizard."

"All right," said Orville, replying for his chum. "Show us the rest of the tableaux and we will detain the Chokeki until we quit the grounds. You will thus have ample time in which to go to the Dai-bozu and obtain the money."

This so delighted the avaricious old man that he fell at their feet and performed the Respectful Ceremony, while Brackett murmured:

"Why didn't you let them race for it?"

"Oh, do stop!" snapped Orv. "Do you imagine two grave Buddhist ministers would run for a prize like a couple of sporting men?"

"Oh, I guess they're human!" said the jester. "Try 'em, chum."

After rejoining Chokeki, who, though he pretended not to listen, had kept his ears open, they inspected the remainder of the tableaux, in which Kuanon was represented as performing some comically wonderful miracles, the artist, whose name was unknown to the *do-jer*, evidently having a keen sense of the ludicrous.

This was not lost upon Brackett, who, spite of his aching head, kept the party roaring with laughter at his amusing questions, to which the old bonze, happy in the thought of soon bagging the reward for deciphering the design on the tablet, replied just as wittily.

Evidently, although he bowed to the figures, he had no real faith in them, and as all the devotees were in the lower part of the grounds inspecting the bicycles, he had no fear, but spoke his mind, while Chokeki, who watched him as a cat does a rat, thought:

"You wait, brother *do-jer*; I'll cut you out of those three *riyos*. As soon as these foreigners quit this hall I will excuse myself, and hurry off and secure the prize. I never met with such a greedy, grasping, avaricious person as you are, in my life. You must be rolling in wealth, yet desire to cheat a poor brother out of three *riyos*."

At last the visitors arrived at the thirty-fifth tableau, which moved upon a pivot and represented a court noble and a lady.

While the *do-jer* was hurriedly mumbling his description, he kept one eye upon his junior, who was fumbling at the checks given for the chums' boots, and otherwise betraying his anxiety to be gone.

Johnnie noticed this, and compelled the lecturer to repeat his formula over and over again, while his chums, who understood the joke, also plied the old man with questions.

"So that is a court *kuge* (noble)?" said Orville.

The *do-jer* bowed, and made a stride toward the entrance-hall.

"Please come back," said Dan. "Is that lady the noble's wife?"

"I really do not know," murmured the old fellow, glancing nervously at Chokeki.

"See here, Rev. Dodger," cried Johnnie, offering him his arm and leading him back, "I want you to answer me a very important question."

"Indeed, your excellencies, I have told you all I know about the sacred images," pleaded the wily bonze, as Chokeki slipped off in order to procure the chums' boots. "That rascal wants to get the best of me, and to beat me out of those three *riyos*. Please permit me to depart. A thousand million thanks for the honor you have shown this temple, and for your high appreciation of these miraculous tableaux."

"Oh, you can't soft-sawder us over in that manner," chuckled Brackett. "I cannot let you go until you have answered my question. I may never again have an opportunity of visiting this unique show, and want to know all about the figures. So that fat man is a court *kuge*, eh?"

"Yes," groaned the *do-jer*. "I am certain Chokeki has gone for that reward. What is it you so particularly wish to know?"

"I am anxious to learn the kuge's fighting weight," gravely answered the wag. "Come, do not make such anxious grimaces."

"Indeed, my lord, I never weighed him," said the agonized *do-jer*. "Will you noblemen please excuse me? If I do not hasten, the Dai-bozu will have quitted the temple. It is now past the hour of the Ram."

"Very well, you can go, then," said Orville, who really pitied the old fellow. "*Sai-o-nara!*"

The aged bonze did not stay to say many farewells, but, tucking up his garments, passed out of the hall, and without waiting for his straw sandals, started at a brisk trot for the main temple.

They found Chokeki in the portal, holding their shoes in his hands, and watching the *do-jer* thread his way between the booths.

Johnnie took the articles from the excited bonze, and ere his chums could prevent him, said:

"Go it, Chokey! Don't let the Dodger get ahead of you."

In another instant the young man was off, and was soon nearing the old one, who, on noticing him, tucked up his robe still higher, and putting on more steam, showed a nimble pair of heels.

"'Rah!" shouted the chums. "Go it, *do-jer!* Go it, Chokeki!"

Just as the excited contestants reached the main door of the temple a bonze drew a straw-rope across it, signifying that it was closed for the day, seeing which the rivals shook their fingers at one another, crying:

"Never mind, never mind! Wait until to-morrow!"

"Well, well!" laughingly observed Dan Mortimer, "if that ain't a comical sight. I never would have believed bonzes were so avaricious. After all, money is their real god."

"They are no worse than some of your countrymen," said Benkei, as they walked toward the main entrance to the grounds. "You forget they are only human!"

"Ben knows how it is himself," said Brackett, poking the doctor in the ribs. "Don't you, old man?"

Benkei detested any reference to his old calling, and would not reply, while Orville remarked:

"Say, Johnnie, doesn't your head ache?"

"No," he answered; "there isn't an ache in it."

"Of course not!" snapped Ben. "There's *nothing* in it. If Brack had any brains he would not have acted as he has done to-day."

"Come, now," good-humoredly retorted the wag, "you needn't get your mad up because I have sent the princess a piano and sewing-machine, and the other things she asked you to bring her. I had brains enough to remember her request."

"Oh, you can pay her all the attention you like," said the jealous doctor, opening his eyes at the announcement. "So that is where you sent your things? Don't mind my feelings!"

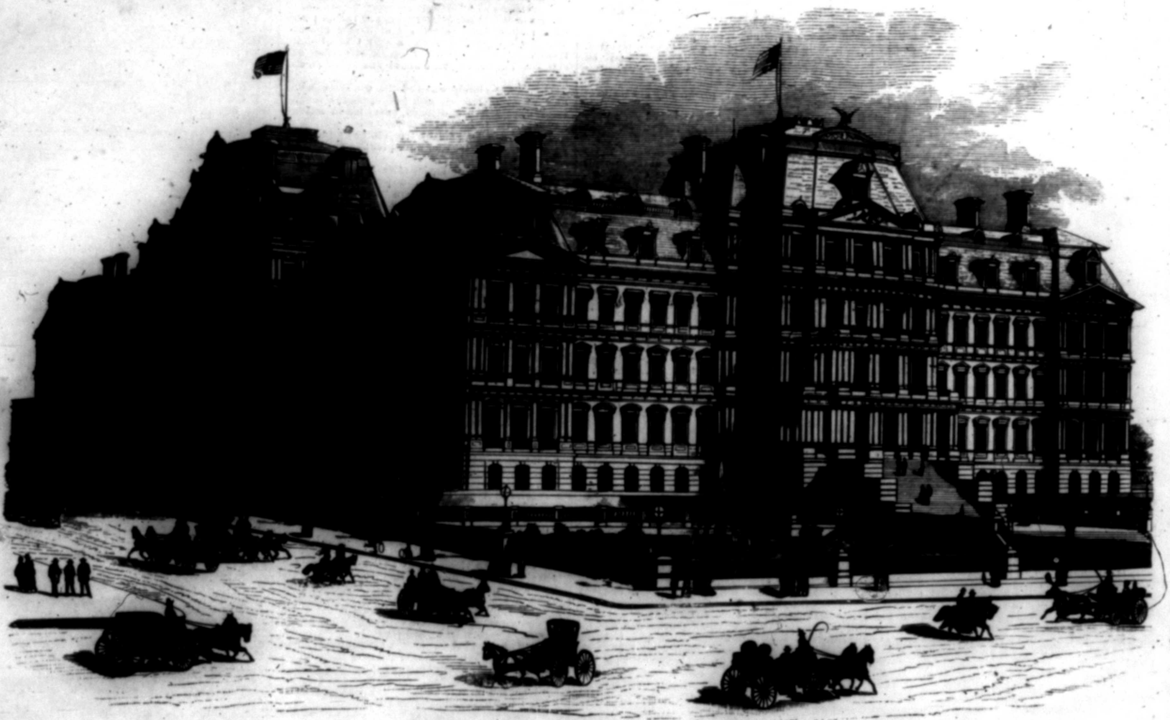
"I won't," said Johnnie. "Talk enough, old chum."

They found Seki's restaurants crowded with customers, and the man counting the piles of money he had received for exhibiting their bicycles.

"Can I offer your excellencies anything?" he inquired. "I wish you would permit me to serve you with some refreshments."

"Much obliged," answered Orville. "We have no desire to be exhibited like our bicycles."

They mounted the instruments, which had been removed from the shed into the garden of the establishment, and Seki, opening a back gate, bowed to them as they spun past, crying:



NAVY AND WAR DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.—SEE PAGE 151.

"*Sao-nari-a! Sendalle arigalo.*" (Farewell! Thanks for your late kindness.)

"He's as keen as a Yankee," remarked Dan to Benkei.

"Yes," answered the doctor. "We Japanese are termed the Yankees of the East."

"Did you ever make wooden nutmegs?" asked Johnnie.

Ben did not reply.

When they reached the *Yashiki* they found Ando, who was anxiously awaiting their arrival.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, upon beholding Brackett, "then you were not killed?"

"No," smilingly replied the wag; "he didn't do it that time."

They went indoors, and while they ate dinner, chatted over the affair with the prince.

"Of course I shall not publish this in the *Ke-yaki*," said Ando. "If it reaches the Emperor you will have a guard sent with you everywhere. I must say, Brackett, I think your life is in great danger."

"Pooh!" cried Johnnie, "that *ronin* won't trouble me any more."

As he spoke a servant entered, bringing a letter, which he handed to Orville, who, upon opening it, said:

"Boys, this is an invitation for us all to attend the Empress's reception."

"Good enough," chuckled Brackett, winking at Benkei. "We'll be on hand to-morrow, at the hour of the Ape—eh, doc?"

CHAPTER VIII.

AT A JAPANESE PRINTER'S.

THAT evening Benkei refused to speak to Johnnie Brackett, and went off to bed in a huff.

"I think you are treating Ben rather roughly, Brack," said Orv, as their chum retired. "You know he is in love with the princess, yet you tease him by pretending to pay her attention."

"Oh, he needn't get so waxy over it," answered the other. "I'm in love with her, too, and that's what hurts his feelings. My folks are fond of Japanese articles of vertu, and they will be tickled to death if I present them with a princess as a daughter-in-law."

"What nonsense!" exclaimed Mortimer. "You must be crazy."

"Is it any worse than our high-toned Boston girls marrying Russian princes, German barons and English noblemen?" demanded the wag. "I tell you I have always admired that young lady immensely, and now that she has saved my life, mean to make her Mrs. J. Brackett, Junior. One would think I were a lunatic and you my keepers. My great reason for visiting this country was to see Miss Tofu. It is you and Benkei who are hard on me. You won't give me the slightest credit even when I am in dead earnest. Ben is in love with that old professor's daughter in Cambridge, and it's only cussedness on his part to pretend he admires my princess."

"See here, Brack," said Dan, "I want you to understand if you don't drop this we shall not permit you to remain as one of our party. Ben is a first-rate fellow, and we won't have him played upon."

"One would think you were speaking of a drum," was the grumbling reply. "It's no use, boys; you can't get rid of Johnnie, and as far as my affair with that young lady goes, I know what it is—you're all jealous of me. I'll go and make it up with the doctor. We will both propose to the princess, and let her decide which shall be the happy man."

He arose, relighted his cigar, and proceeding to the chamber occupied by Benkei, rapped on the door-post.

"Well," grunted Ben; "who is it?"

"Your old chum, Johnnie," he answered. "I want to have a little chat with you, dear boy."

"I am in bed," said the doctor, who had no desire to make it up. "I have nothing to say to you, sir."

Brackett did not wait, but walked right in, and seating himself upon his friend's valise, puffed at his cigar and said:

"Now, what are you so mad about, Ben? If there is anything I hate, it is having folks grumpy with me. If I have trodden on your corns, old man, I am ready to apologize."

Benkei did not reply; however, that mattered very little to Johnnie, who continued:

"The boys seem to think I have not done just what is right by you, Doc, and threaten to drop me. Now I ask you, as a sensible man, would you not have an awfully slow time if I didn't stir things up a bit?"

The doctor was inwardly laughing at his friend's cheek, but did not answer him, so Brackett went on:

"There may come a day when my talents will be appreciated, and until then I am willing to be ignored. If you don't think much of me, your Tenno does, and I believe I am not quite an object of dislike to a certain lovely and accomplished princess."

This annoyed Benkei, who, rising upon his mat, warmly replied:

"What do you mean by presuming to think of Tofu?"

Tofu is the Japanese word for bean-curd, so Johnnie chuckled and answered:

"Chut, chut; can't anybody like *tofu* but you?"

"Brackett!" said Ben, "if you only knew how I loved that young lady you would not make fun of my affections! I have worshiped her ever since I last saw her at Wakamatsu!"

"How about Miss Sophie Lamont?" slyly inquired Johnnie.

"She's married!" answered the doctor, smiling in spite of himself.

"And the professor's bonny darling, who is now pining for you in Cambridge?" asked the wag. "Ah, ha! Got you this time!"

"Oh, I—I—you—you—I—never was in love with her!" stammered the other.

"See here, old cham," said Brackett, "it's a fair race between us, and my motto is to let the best man win! It is no good getting your mad up, and the boys talking about dropping me! I am here, and mean to stay and cheer you. If the princess likes me best, I shall lead her to the altar; if, on the contrary, you can win her, I shall say, 'Bless you, my children!' I think she's just splendid, and will make any fellow who secures her hand happy!"

"Then you are not joking in the matter?" exclaimed Ben.

"No!" was the reply; "I am in earnest! Shake hands, chum, and let us resume our old friendship."

Benkei extended his hand, and, grasping Johnnie's, said:

"Chum, do try and be more serious! Remember you are in a strange country, where people do not understand practical jokes!"

"I think the Reverend Dodger did!" said the irrepressible fellow. "Bet you a dollar he gets up early to-morrow and secures that reward? He is a caution, he is!"

"He is one in a thousand!" continued the doctor. "My countrymen are superstitious, quick-tempered and revengeful. Indeed, apart from all feeling about the princess, I think it will be best for you to return home by the next steamer. That *ronin* will never rest, but will follow you, like an Indian, day and night, and, perhaps, in mistake, murder one of our good chums!"

"Oh, he isn't so stupid as all that!" chuckled Johnnie, once more shaking his friend's hand. "It's no use your trying, old stick-in-the-mud; you can't scare this child! I believe in my luck—good-night! I'll endeavor and be more serious; though, if I were, I don't think you would like me half as well as you do now. As for that *ronin*—he won't worry us; Tofu scared him! Good-night! Mind, if I am not the favored one, I'll be the best man at your wedding!"

The next morning they rose bright and early, and started for The Street of the Printers.

In Tokio, as in all Eastern cities, each trade has its district, the reason being as follows:

A man becomes celebrated for his proficiency in a certain art, say that of printing, and gathers about him a number of apprentices and assistants, who, in time, set up in business for themselves, and get their share of the trade. Now, if the new men went to live in some other part of the city, they would not easily be found, so they settle close by their old master, while around them there gradually gathers a number of artificers and tradesmen connected with their art, and in time they form themselves into a guild.

Thus it was that the printers of Tokio had for centuries inhabited one part of the city, which was locally ruled by the chief of their guild, termed the "Oto-Kodate of the Brotherhood of the Heaven-Illuminated Characters," who was responsible to the Governor for all the men in his society, and as such had great political influence.

This Oto-Kodate was a very fine man and a friend to foreigners. Had he not been so when the American presses were introduced in order to print the Tokio daily papers, his people would have revolted.

As it was, there had been some very tall talk on the part of the members of the guild, the Japanese printers, like those of outside nations, being well-read men, and the last to permit any one to take away their privileges.

When the first newspaper was issued each page had been written on a sheet of thin paper, which was pasted, face downward, on a block and engraved; but as this old-style process would never do for a daily paper, the proprietors of the journals had imported metal types (Japanese characters), cast in the States, and steam-presses, and had sent young men abroad to learn the art of stereotyping; on hearing of which the guild of printers had assembled and demanded that their Oto-Kodate should respectfully require the owners of the machines and types to hand them over to the men who alone were entitled to print upon paper, within the bounds of the City of Tokio.

They feared the steam-driven presses would reduce men and their families to starvation, and, as they knew no other trade, vowed to die for their rights.

The Oto-Kodate listened to them, and permitted the most noisy among the guild to vent their spleen in words, then, bowing gravely, replied:

"My most worthy brothers of the 'Heaven-Illuminated Characters,' listen! I admit all you say concerning these cooking-pot machines that can in one week turn out as many sheets as we do in a year; I acknowledge the justness of your claim to the sole right of printing anything in this metropolis; but listen! There are two sides to every question, and it behoves us to be on the right one. When the art of engraving, writing on wooden blocks, was first discovered, the copyists, who had hereto had it all their own way in the matter, and who were said to have numbered hundreds of thousands, protested against the invention and threatened to kill the first printers, hearing of which the Daimio sent for the malcontents and said: 'You fellows are fools; if you were not you would stop your silly talk and learn the new art, which you must see is destined to swallow up the old one!' The copyists listened to this, and, perceiving the advice was sensible, to say nothing of having no desire to lose their heads—which they most assuredly would have done had they murdered the professors of the new art—went home and became apprentices to the printers and were the first members of our noble guild, which was, for many years, known as the 'Brotherhood of Copyists and Printers.' Now, think over what I have related, and, instead of growling at the men who desire to make the glory of Japan shine beyond the seas, accept the inevitable and offer your services to the proprietors of the newspapers and foreign printing establishments."

"*Hai, hai, hai!*" (Yes, yes, yes!) they shouted, as one man. "*Yoroshin!*" (All right!)

Thus it was that Ikebe Minoda, the Oto-Kodate of the guild of printers, by his wisdom, prevented the men from rising and attacking those who were introducing movable type and steam-presses into the country. For his valuable services he had received the personal thanks of the Mikado, and a pension of a thousand *yen* (dollars) a year, paid not by the Government, but by the guild he had so nobly saved from disgrace.

Such was the man who, dressed in ordinary native garments, received the chums at the gateway of the Printers' Quarter, and after being introduced to each of them, said, in Japanese:

"I am about to show you a scene that will, ere long, cease to be enacted, for the steam dragon is devouring our wooden blocks, and they will soon be things of the past."

"I wonder you do not become connected with one of the modern printing offices," remarked Orville, as they entered the gate marking the eastern boundary of the Oto-Kodate's district.

"Your excellency," he replied, with a bow that would have become a grandee, "my place is here. My forefathers for over a thousand years have been Oto-Kodate of this guild, and I desire to be the last one. When all my brothers are provided for, and have learned your styles of printing, I may do as you say. Until that time I shall remain here, to advise those who earn their living as their fathers have done."

He led the way into the street, and presently the chums found themselves among a crowd of busy, grimy, yelling, half-naked men, some of whom were rushing hither and thither with piles of blank paper, tied in little bales, others stirring ink in small tubs, laughing and joking as they did so, and others working in the open-fronted rooms of the houses, inking blocks, pulling impressions of the same, or inspecting proofs. Everything was bustle, animation and stir, while above all rose a horrible smell of ink.

There were no offices such as are seen in our own country. Each boss printer worked in his own home with his apprentices, and there were neither presses, types, rollers, nor any other appliances as used by foreigners.

In Japan the art preservative is reduced to a very simple operation. There are, in the American sense of the word, no compositors and no proof-readers—at least at the printers', and the workmen are not required to possess the high intelligence of our typos. All the operators have to do is to squat on the floor, take the block from which impressions are wanted, place it on a low bench before them, and lightly brush or stamp the engraved surface of the wood with an ink composed of oxskin glue, the sap of unripe persimmons, called *shibu*, and lampblack.

This process merely calls for ordinary care, and when it is finished the printer drops his inky brush or tamping wad, then seizing a sheet of thin, light, tough *kodzu* paper, places it squarely upon the moist block, and picking up a flat rubber, lined with the hard bud-scales of the bamboo, uses it like a printer's ball, passing it rapidly over every portion of the word, and occasionally raising a corner of the page in order to ascertain if the impression be perfect.

That is all. When he thinks he has rubbed long enough he puts aside his instrument, takes the sheet by the two corners next to him and strips it off; then, after laying it aside to dry, obtains a second pull, which is, of course, fainter than the first.

If he prints in colors, he uses a number of blocks and various fancy inks, but the process in no way differs from the ordinary operation, excepting that he has to be very careful in placing the paper so that the various colors shall cover their respective parts on the figures or scene.

The art of chromo-xylography—printing in colors with wooden blocks—has long been practiced in Japan, some of the pictures requiring as many as twenty-five blocks and tints, but the *hiragana* (text) is always in black, and much of it in a running hand interspersed with Chinese characters, the sentences being sometimes oddly inserted in any vacant place on a picture, such as the sky or on the ground. This gives their illustrations a very tangled look, though they prefer it to our fashion of putting descriptive lines or captions above and below an engraving.

The chums closely watched the workmen, who, as they inked, tamped and pulled, sang, shouted, smoked, perspired and joked, never for an instant pausing, even to look at their visitors.

The men, being paid by the job, had no time to devote to foreigners, who were plentiful enough on the streets.

"Say," shouted Johnnie, after the chums had, guided by the Oto-Kodate, inspected several establishments, all of which were "as like as peas," "can't you show us something new? I don't see any difference between these men; they all perspire freely, yell as though they had the colic, and work as if driven by steam. I'd like a change."

"So would I," said Dan. "The noise makes my head ache."

The Oto-Kodate conducted the party to the "Temple of the Honorable Guild of the Brothers of the Heaven-Illuminated Characters," where he treated them to cakes and tea, and exhibited the insignia of the Order—a gilded brush, such as is used by the Japanese as a pen, an inkstone and a gigantic stick of ink, wreathed with flowers and embossed with hideous dragons.

"We meet here once a moon," he remarked; "and we have our grips, passwords and signs, like any other society, to say nothing of having a good time, our only drawback being the drunkenness of some of the brothers, who, spite of all I say, will fill themselves up with *saké*, and go shouting and singing through the streets;" adding, as though in excuse: "Printing is such very dry work. Is it so in your country?"

Ere Orville could reply, Johnnie said:

"Yes, sir; some of our compositors cannot set up a stickful of type without first filling themselves with whisky; though, as a rule, they are sober, well-informed, industrious citizens, and as good, if not better, than any of us."

"What do you call a stickful of type?" demanded the Oto-Kodate.

Brackert was about to "stuff" the man with a comical description, when Dan stopped his little game and explained the meaning of the term, after which he said to Johnnie, in English:

"Drop it, Brack. This gentleman is doing his best to instruct us, and you want to guy him."

As they were chatting and refreshing themselves, the wag observed some *goher* wands of paper, used in the Shinto Temple suspended over the symbols of the printers' guild, which were placed on an altar at the far end of the hall.

"What are those?" he said. "Fly-flappers?"

The Oto-Kadate laughed, and replied:

"Those are magical papers, printed in invisible colors, for conjurers, fortune-tellers, and other vagabonds."

"Magical papers!" cried Brackett. "May we see some of them more closely?"

The Ote-Kodate smiled, and going to a recessed shelf, at the side of the altar, brought a plain sheet of *kodzu* paper, which he handed to Johnnie, saying:

"What is printed on that?"

"Nothing," was the response.

"Take it by the two upper corners and dip it in that bowl of water," said their entertainer.

Brackett obeyed, and, as he raised the wet sheet, beheld upon it a colored picture of *Shu-ten-doji*, a red-bodied, red-haired ghoul, drinking *saké* out of a big tub, while in one corner was written, in Japanese characters:

"Why am I like a *Be-koku-jin?*" (American man.)

On seeing what had developed, the Oto-kodate, who had no wish to insult his guests, beat his forehead and exclaimed:

"Oh, miserable fool that I am! What have I done? That is just like the joker, Nami-Kawa. I am ashamed. Indeed, your excellencies, I had no intention of thus annoying you."

"We are not annoyed, good friend," said Dan, who could understand the fun of the picture. "It is really very amusing. Ben, old fellow, will you kindly translate this sentence in the upper corner?"

The Oto-Kodate hid his face in the sleeve of his garment, and the doctor rendered the character into English, explaining to Johnnie and Don that the answer to the conundrum was:

"Because I am a red-headed, drunken beast."

"Helas! helas!" moaned the Oto-Kodate, clasping his hands with the fingers pressed upright against one another. "I took out the wrong paper. They were brought here at our last meeting by that mad wag, Nami-Kawa, who prints these invisible pictures. Indeed, indeed, I did not mean to show you that one. Oh these foolish practical jokers, they make one laugh, but their fun always causes one to cry."

Johnnie grinned, and turning to the worthy man, said:

"We would like to meet Mr. Nami-Kawa, and see how these things are made."

"Yes, yes!" urged the others; "this is something very curious."

"Your excellencies," he replied, "I will take you to Nami's house, but I warn you that he is a crazy fellow, who is always playing tricks."

"All right," answered Brackett; "we know how it is ourselves. Lead the way."

CHAPTER IX.

IN WHICH A JAPANESE PRINTER PLAYS A TRICK UPON JOHNNIE.

NAMI-KAWA, the artist-printer of invisible pictures, was a Japanese Johnnie Brackett, and spared no one. His jokes were the talk of the quarter, and so well was he known, no one ever got very angry with him for his mad tricks.

He was very rich, as his family alone knew the secret of printing in colors that vanished when dry, and being a privileged individual, he felt what American boys term "sassy," or "as good as the next man."

While the chums were walking toward their destination, the Oto-Kodate impressed the foregoing facts upon their minds, and warned them to keep their eyes open, as Nami would play a trick on his own parents.

"You'd best let me handle him, dear boys," remarked Johnnie, who was elated at the idea of meeting a fellow-wag. "If he tries to play off any little game on me I'll turn the tables upon him."

After quite a walk they reached a spacious house, built like a daimio's *yashiki*, and surrounded with beautiful grounds, containing fine trees, groves of bamboo and dwarfed shrubs, trimmed into all manner of grotesque shapes, many of them being evergreen jokes or conundrums.

The Oto-Kodate was evidently nervous; indeed, in his heart, felt sorry he had agreed to bring them there, and was hoping Nami would be absent from home; however, he conducted the party into the audience-chamber, and bade a servant tell his master that some strangers from afar and his friend, Ikebe Minoda, desired to see him.

The man retired, and presently there entered the most solemn-faced Japanese the chums had ever seen.

This was the renowned Nami-Kawa, who, spite of his merry disposition and fondness for practical joking, had wonderful command of facial expression.

"Hello!" whispered Brackett to Benkei; "he looks as though he had just assisted at his own funeral. I don't believe he ever put up a gag on any one."

"Hush!" breathed the doctor. "He has a twinkling eye."

After their host had been duly introduced, and the Oto-Kodate had informed him that the foreign excellencies desired to see some of his productions, Nami said, in a hollow, sepulchral voice:

"I am, indeed, honored. Come this way, *samas* (my lords). I will explain everything but the secret of the invisible colors, which is not known by mortal man."

"How is that?" asked Johnnie, who, to use his own expression, 'froze on to Nami-Kawa from the word go.' "You need not be afraid; we shall not go into business in opposition to you."

"I feel no alarm on that score," was the gloomy response. "I know you would not set up as my rivals, but the truth is, the secret of invisible printing was taught my ancestors by a Tengu (a long-nosed goblin, described in Japanese fairy tales), and if I were to reveal it, he would come in the night and torture me. A Tengu mixes all my colors."

"You're joking," cried Brackett, poking him in the ribs. "Come, my friend, you can't play that Tengu on me."

"Ah!" sighed the wag, who was, of course, only making fun of his guests, "I never joke. If you had a demon always threatening to drive his nose through your body, as that Tengu threatens to do through mine, you'd feel as sad as I do. Joke, indeed! I'm a haunted man!"

He conducted them into an immense workshop, in which his associates were printing pictures of all kinds, some being excruciatingly comical, both in coloring and design.

"But you can see the color in these," remarked Dan, picking up a cartoon representing a rich daimio being carried to Heaven in a *norimon*, borne by a crowd of bonzes, while below him, a poor cripple was being kicked into the nether world by a single bonze, who had dealt the poverty-stricken ghost what the Irishman termed "a divil's utfull."

The picture was wonderfully well drawn, and was printed in seven tints, between the groups being the following significant sentences:

"*Jingoku no sata mo, kane shidai.*" (Literally, "Even hell's judgments are according to money," or "Even after one is dead, money is a good thing.")

The artist-printer glanced at his production and said, in a lugubrious tone:

"Yes, you can see the *iro* (color) now! It is like *iro* (love), warm when it is fresh, but will quickly dry and fade!"

He sighed, and showed them how, as soon as the moisture evaporated from the picture, the tints vanished, leaving the paper blank.

"Come, Mr. Nami-Kawa," urged Brackett, who had been too much interested with the processes to play off any of his tricks, "tell us the secret of this invisible color-printing. How is it done?"

"You must ask the Tengu!" was the man's melancholy reply, and that was all the explanation he would give.

He showed them side-splitting pictures of various domestic scenes, and described the text without so much as blinking, while inwardly he was almost dying with laughter.

He had assumed a melancholy cast of face just for the purpose of deceiving his guests, and kept it up capitally.

"I thought you were a wag!" murmured Johnnie. "I am sorry to see you suffering from such deep depression of spirits!" with which he slapped him on the back, crying: "Rouse up, old man! I should think, by these pictures, you ought to enjoy a practical joke!"

"Oh, I do!" answered Nami, in the same doleful voice. "So do you, I believe! You are the gentleman who threw that spitball in the ex-Samurai's eye, are you not?"

"Yes!" chuckled Brackett. "How came you to hear of it?"

"I was out at Asakusa yesterday, hunting for incidents," answered the artist-printer; then, excusing himself for a minute, he went to a side-room and procured two sheets of seemingly blank paper, remarking, as he returned and handed them to Johnnie: "Do you recognize these portraits? Wet them!" The chums gathered round as Brackett damped the cartoons, and they presently beheld a comical sketch of Johnnie in the act of closing one eye and taking a shot at the Samurai, and the *ronin* receiving the missive in his organ of vision.

"May I have those?" inquired Brackett. "I'd like to send them to my folks in America."

"Certainly," answered Nami. "Now, come into my private studio and see my latest practical joke!"

The Oto-Kodate signaled caution, but Johnnie did not heed it, remarking to their host, as they followed him:

"I'd like you to try and play a practical joke on me."

"Indeed, Nami-Kawa would not think of thus trifling with a guest of the Tenno," significantly remarked the Oto-Kodate, glancing, meaningly, at the rueful face of their host, who, spite of his Japanese features, strongly resembled the immortal Don Quixote. "We Nihonese, although fond of jesting and playing comical tricks with *one another*, are not so ill-bred as to do so with the guests of our Imperial Master—are we, Nami?"

Instead of replying to this, the artist-printer solemnly observed:

"It is a *lovely day!*" then, opening the door of his private studio, showed them into a magnificently decorated apartment, carpeted with silk-embroidered mats stuffed with elastic *mawatta* (silk wadding). Around the walls were arranged beautiful specimens of their host's skill with the pencil, and scattered in elegant confusion about the place were works of art in lacquer, bronze and porcelain, worth many thousand dollars.

Nami, being the chief of the family possessing the secret of printing in invisible colors, was exceedingly rich, and as the customs of Japan prevented him from receiving a title, had no means of spending his income in entertaining nobles, so devoted his immense fortune to the cause of charity and to beautifying his studio.

During the last years of the Shogun's rule, Yeddo, as Tokio was then called, was visited by a terrible earthquake, which destroyed thousands of houses and killed an immense number of people. When Nami, who was away in Kioto, heard of this, he sent to the Oto-Kodate, saying:

"I will charge myself with the restoration of the homes of all the printers, and herewith inclose a draft on the Shogun's treasury for five thousand *yen* (dollars), with which please purchase food and clothing for our unfortunate brothers and their families."

Such was the wag, Nami-Kawa, who, like Johnnie Brackett, notwithstanding his fondness for practical joking, had a noble heart.

Although polite and kind to foreigners, he thought more of his own people than of the strangers, and though he had sketched the faces of Brackett and the ex-Samurai, and treated the incident humorously, he sympathized with the *ronin*.

Of couse he did not wish to see Johnnie killed, but thought he deserved to have a trick played on him in return.

He exhibited a number of treasures, such as rare *nitsuki* (ivory buttons, carved in all manner of grotesque designs), bronzes of the Hojo period, lacquered cabinets filled with articles worth their weight in gold, and magnificent specimens of cream-colored satsuma, black raku, *some-tsuki* (blue ware), *kanu* or *hibiki* (craquel), *seidji*, *aki* (red ware), and *gosai* (five colors), which he told them had cost him ten thousand *yen*.

"You amaze me," said Orville, who remembered they were in a country where a poor man can exist upon half a cent a day. "I had no idea you valued these articles so highly. You have a collection worthy of any prince."

"Yes," remarked the Oto-Kodate, who was hoping, now that their host was busy describing his curiosities, that he would not attempt any of his tricks. "The fame of Nami-Kawa's Museum of Works of Art has extended over Nihon, and artists come here from every part of the land."

"I am always willing to exhibit my treasures," grimly observed Nami, "but of late years few persons have availed themselves of my desire to serve them."

"Why not?" inquired Dan, as he critically examined a superb specimen of the sword-makers' art. "I should think they would be only too happy to inspect such a magnificent collection."

"They are afraid of my playing tricks upon them," sadly answered their host. "I cannot help it, and some people are foolish enough to feel angry with me."

"I am surprised at that," chuckled Johnnie. "Come, we have heard so much about your ability as a practical joker, will you not give us a specimen of your fun in that line? I like to play folks tricks."

"You are the guest of the Tenno!" murmured their host, as though speaking to himself; then, addressing Orville, said: "Will your excellencies honor me by partaking of some refreshment?"

"It is drawing near the hour of the Horse," (noon) answered the young man. "We have an appointment at the hour of the Ape, and it is some distance from this to our *Yashiki*. However, as it would be very rude of us to refuse your invitation, we will accept, asking as a favor that you will kindly excuse us as soon as possible."

"Oh, certainly," sighed Nami. "The refreshments are right here."

As he spoke the silken mat in the centre of the studio opened, and a square tray, laden with tea and sweetmeats, rose through the floor.

"This is a good joke," said Johnnie, as they squatted round it. "It's like the 'Arabian Nights.'"

Their new friend handed them the refreshing beverage, which was served in elegant cups of old Hizen ware, and when they had eaten and drank, gave each of the chums a bag containing something round, saying:

"Crack those, on your return home. They are *Tengu's* eggs." Then, tapping the tray, caused it to vanish and reappear, laden with bowls half-filled with rose-colored, sweet-smelling water, by the side of every vessel being two neatly-folded napkins.

At that moment one of the printers summoned Nami, who, before he moved, said:

"Will your excellencies bathe your hands and faces? This liquid is what the Tengu uses in mixing his wonderful colors. It will preserve you from harm!"

"You are not, by this, playing a trick on the guests of the Tenno, are you?" nervously asked the Oto-Kodate.

"I am only desirous of doing them a service," he solemnly replied, and, rising, quitted the room.

"Come," remarked Orville, seizing a towel; "I am not afraid. The color is only perfume!" then, laving his hands and face, he exclaimed: "How delightfully refreshing!"

All present, but Johnnie, followed his example, while Nami, who was peeping at them through a spyhole in the paper wall, grinned and murmured to himself:

"Now I will repay you for your little joke of yesterday, and see how you like your own physic!"

"Hum-m!" thought Brackett, pretending to dry his features on a towel; "you think you're going to dye my face red, Mr. Nami; but you can't fool Johnnie!"

When the last towel was returned to the tray, the latter sank out of sight, and the silken mat closed over the place like a stage-trap.

"Ah," said their host, re-entering, as though in great haste, carrying in his hand a bowl containing a beautiful pearl-like dust, "you have accomplished your toilet; permit me to offer you some powder!"

Ere Johnnie could decline, the artist had dabbed his face, neck and hands with the substance, and was serving Dan in the same way.

When Brackett slyly endeavored to rub it off he discovered that it stuck like dry resin; so, giving up the attempt until he reached the *Yashiki*, he lighted a cigar and prepared to depart.

Nami administered the same treatment to all his visitors, then remarked, as Orville shook his head:

"That substance," pointing to the bowl, "is most excellent for the complexion! It is called Tengu-bloom, and will remove freckles!"

They all saluted him and said "*Sai-o-nara*," and when Brackett took his leave he remarked:

"Say, Mr. Nami, how about your practical joke?"

The artist sighed, and taking an invisible picture from the shelf, handed it to him, saying:

"When you reach your lodgings wet this! *Sai-o-nara!*"

"But the little joke, you know?" urged Brackett.

"You'll find that out presently," was his host's melancholy response. "*Sai-o-nara.* Call again, your excellencies. I shall always be most happy to see you. When you reach home, damp that picture."

After they were well out of the artist-printer's grounds, the Oto-Kodate whispered:

"I would strongly council you to throw those bags away. They most likely contain something that will make you angry."

"Here goes," cried Johnnie, taking his present, a beautifully-molded porcelain egg, from its bag, and tossing it against the masonry of a fire-curtain.

They all hurried up to the spot, and saw a hideous toad, which had been inclosed in the egg, hop away, winking and blinking from the effects of the light.

This made them laugh and serve their presents as their chum had done.

Orville's egg was full of live flies; Dan's contained a living mouse; Don's released a million of stinging ants, and Benkei's was empty, written inside, in running Japanese characters, being this sentence:

"Why is a Tengu's egg like a bonze's head?"

On reading the foregoing, Ben set his foot upon the fragments and ground them into powder. He knew that the conundrum was intended to make him angry, the reply being:

"Because both are mere empty shells."

They watched the toad hop out of sight, the ants run hither and thither, the flies settle on the wall and smooth their wings, and the mouse frantically vanish into a hole, after which the Oto-Kodate showed them the way to the *Yashiki*, and on quitting them, said:

"I rejoice exceedingly that Nami-Kawa behaved so well. He must be sick. I never before saw him look so melancholy."

"He felt bad because he could not think of a trick to play us," chuckled Johnnie. "I don't think much of his Tengu's eggs."

When they reached their residence he ran off to the bathing-room and took a dip, and was emerging from the water as his chums entered the apartment.

"Hello!" cried Orville, pointing to him in amazement. "Say, Johnnie, what have you done to your face and hands? They're as red as fire!"

Brackett glanced in a mirror and saw that his features were of a brilliant scarlet, his hands being of the same hue.

"Ah!" slyly observed Benkei; "so Nami has played a trick on you, after all, Brack. You won't be able to show your face to Tofu in that pickle."

"Won't I?" he hissed, as he savagely regarded their laughing faces. "Won't I? Well, you'll see whether I will or not!"

[To be continued.]

A HERO THAT DRIVES A TRUCK.

MRS. GILMOUR, of Hunter's Point, L. I., while on a Hunter's Point ferryboat, one day, recently, placed her little girl on the railing at the rear end of the boat. The child began to clap its hands and play with its mother. Suddenly it fell into the water. The mother screamed, and fainted. The passengers rushed wildly about, and the boat was quickly stopped.

Meanwhile, Dave Jordan, a driver for Thomas Lynn, paper-box manufacturer, of No. 90 Crosby Street, New York, plunged into the river, and, being a good swimmer, he reached the child before it sank. Taking it on his back, he swam toward the boat. A rope was thrown to him, and the brave fellow, with his burden, was lifted upon the deck. The mother, who had recovered, was frantic with joy, and could scarcely speak.

The passengers crowded around the rescuer and shook his hand. He said he was glad that he had been able to save the child, but declined to accept a liberal sum of money which had been collected, saying that he had not risked his life for money. He saved a boy from drowning last Summer.

A MIRACULOUS ESCAPE.

THE science of the period does not accept the theory of miracles, and yet it is difficult to account for the event represented in our engraving without admitting some interposition of the nature of a special Providence. On the night of the 6th November, a train of the Chicago and Alton Railroad was speeding toward the bridge that crosses the Mississippi at Louisiana, in Missouri. In the path over which the iron-horse was being urged there was, several hundred feet from the shore, a yawning chasm over a hundred feet wide. The river had undermined the third pier from the shore, and still some distance from the draw, and it had gone down, carrying a whole section of the bridge with it. The time of night was 11:45, and the freight train had crossed safely at 11. The engineer gave the accustomed three whistles as he approached the bridge, and the position of the signal-lights showed that the draw was shut.

The engineer, whose name is P. McNamara, said that as he approached the bridge he was seized with a strong presentiment that all was not right. He could see no signal from the watchman always kept on duty at the bridge, and proceeded very slowly. All at once—and he could not tell why he did it—the engineer reversed the engine and stopped his train. He got off to look ahead, and found the pilot within two feet of the yawning chasm. Another turn of the wheels and he never would have lived to tell the story, nor, in all probability, any of the hundred or more passengers in the five coaches, which would have inevitably plunged into the roaring torrent fifty feet below. It seems the watchman, who had passed over the bridge after the freight passed, had gone on a spree, and was found drunk in the city. The train was stopped until the next morning, and the passengers transferred.

SINGULAR ENCOUNTER WITH A STAG.

AT the sitting of the Romford (England) County Court, before Mr. Abdy, the judge, James Bull a young man in the service of the New Civil Service Association, sued William Alexander, of the Reindeer Inn, Buckhurst Hill, for £15, as compensation for injury and damage sustained through an attack by a stag belonging to the defendant.

From the evidence of the plaintiff it seems that on the tenth of October he was on a visit at Loughton, and while out for a walk with some friends, a stag which they met in the high-road rushed at him and knocked him down. Grasping the vicious animal by the horns, he was dragged from one side of the road to the other and back, and was then jammed up against the bank, where he was held for some minutes; meanwhile, his three friends, in the full assurance that "discretion was the better part of valor," placed the hedge between themselves and the infuriated denizen of the forest, and endeavored to release their friend from his perilous position between the bank and the antlers of the stag by trying to draw him through the hedge. On the animal dragging the plaintiff back again into the road the latter tried to regain his standing, but was unceremoniously knocked down by his unmerciful antagonist, one horn striking him in the chest and the other in the ribs. He then held desperately by the horns until his friends, rendered more brave by their companion's peril, came to his assistance, and by repeated application of a stout stick beat the animal off, but not before breaking his lower jaw. Plaintiff was covered with bruises, his hat was destroyed, his coat was spoiled by the mud, his trowsers were adorned with a large rent, and his boots were so much damaged as to require new springs. Judgment was given for £7.

NAVY OF THE UNITED STATES—ITS ORGANIZATION.

THE headquarters of the Navy—from whence all orders, rules, regulations and laws for its government are issued—is at Washington, D. C. It is the Navy Department.

To facilitate work, the Department is divided into Bureaus, having for superintendents or chiefs Admirals, Commodores, Captains or Commanders. The officers of the latter two grades, when Chiefs of Bureaus, rank with a commodore, and are entitled to the same honors, pay and salutes.

The Department is divided into:

Office of the Secretary of the Navy; Bureau of Equipment and Recruiting; Bureau of Ordnance; Bureau of Navigation and Detail; Bureau of Yards and Docks; Bureau of Medicine and Surgery; Bureau of Provisions and Clothing; Bureau of Steam Engineering; Bureau of Construction and Repairs.

To each Chief of Bureau is assigned the duties which relate to his particular department. For instance—to the Ordnance, the construction of guns, carriages, ammunition—all that relates to their gear, to arms and to torpedoes.

To the Chief of Navigation, instruments for navigating and surveying, flags, bunting; besides the detailing officers for duty.

The Hydrographic Office and Signal Corps are offshoots of the Navigation Bureau, independent of it, so that the superintendent may not, if ranking the Chief of Navigation, be a subordinate to him.

The Naval Observatory is likewise independent of this Bureau. It is under the direction of a Rear-Admiral, assisted by professors and naval officers.

The Coast of Survey vessels are commanded and officered by naval men, though the superintendent is a civilian.

The Lighthouse Department is composed of a mixed board of Navy and Army officers. It is under the direction of the Secretary of the Treasury.

The United States possess several Navy Yards. At each Yard there is a branch representing the Bureaus at Washington. The Superintendents of the branches are named, Ordnance Officer, Navigation Officer, etc.

The Navy Yards and Stations are at Portsmouth, N. H.; Boston, Mass.; Brooklyn, N. Y.; League Island, Pa.; Washington, D. C.; Norfolk, Va.; Pensacola, Fla.; Mare Island, Cal.; Port Royal, S. C.; Torpedo Station at Newport, R. I.

It is at the Navy Yards that the vessels are constructed and are fitted out for sea.

At each Navy Yard and Station there is a receiving ship, where sailors are shipped for the Navy and cared for till drafted to a sea-going vessel.

There are also hospitals for the sick, and marine barracks for the marine corps; and at Philadelphia there is an asylum for old and disabled sailors whose wounds or long service entitle them to Government support and protection.

The Yards and Stations are commanded by a Rear-Admiral, Commodore or Captain, who has a Captain or Commander as Executive.

The cruising stations of the Navy are: North Atlantic Station; South Atlantic Station; European Station; Pacific Station; Asiatic Station.

Vessels are also employed on special service, or with a roving commission.

The Navy consists of one hundred and twenty-three vessels—such as they are—including steamers, sailing crafts, transports, ironclads and torpedo-boats. They are classed as follows:

First-rates.—Steamships of over 4,000 tons displacement, and iron-clads of over 3,000 tons displacement.

Second-rates.—Steamers from 2,000 to 4,000 tons displacement, and iron-clads from 2,000 to 3,000 tons displacement.

Third-rates.—Steamers from 900 to 2,000 tons displacement, and iron-clads from 1,200 to 2,000 tons displacement.

Fourth-rates.—Steam-hips below 800 tons displacement.

We will omit the sailing vessels, as it would be folly to send them to sea in the event of war. Of the one hundred and twenty-three vessels of the Navy, not more than twenty are in cruising order, or available for service; the balance should be placed in the rotten row of the Navy Yards. Congress will not appropriate the means to build a navy, hence its crippled condition.

Personnel of the Navy.

The following are the ranks of the officers:

Of the Line.

Admiral; Vice-Admiral; Rear-Admiral; Commodore; Captain; Commander; Lieutenant-Commander; Lieutenant; Master; Ensign; Midshipman; Cadet Midshipman.

Staff Officers.

Medical and Pay-Directors; Medical and Pay-Inspectors; Chief-Engineers, having same rank at sea; Fleet-Surgeons; Fleet-Paymasters, and Fleet-Engineers; Surgeons; Paymasters; Chief-Engineers; Passed-Assistant Surgeons; Passed-Assistant Paymasters; and Passed-Assistant Engineers. Assistant Surgeons; Assistant Paymasters; Assistant Engineers; Cadet Engineers.

Other Officers.

Naval Constructor; Assistant Naval Constructor; Chaplain; Professor of Mathematics; Civil Engineer; Boatswain; Gunner; Carpenter; Sailmaker.

The officers of the four latter grades are called *warrant*, or *forward* officers, because they are not commissioned—that is, confirmed by the Senate, and also because their mess-room and apartments are forward of those of all other officers.

Secretaries, clerks, yeoman, apothecary, and master-at-arms are "appointed officers" and "appointed petty officers."

The secretary is appointed by the Admiral; clerks by the Paymaster; the apothecary by the Surgeon; the engineer yeoman by the Chief-Engineer, and ship's yeoman is selected by the Executive Officer. Such appointments are approved by the Commanding Officer.

The Navy is divided into the "Active" and "Retired List." The Retired List consists of officers who have attained the age of sixty-two years, or who have seen forty-five years' service, or, after forty years of consecutive service, have applied to be retired, or have been placed on the Retired List on account of physical disability, or by virtue of the power intrusted to the Board of Examiners, who have to take into consideration the mental and moral fitness of the applicant for promotion.

The following regulations must be complied with by applicants for the positions of Cadet Midshipmen and Cadet Engineers:

Nomination.

The number of Cadet Midshipmen allowed at the Naval Academy is one for every Member and Delegate of the House of Representatives, one for the District of Columbia, and ten at large.

The nomination of candidates for admission from the District of Columbia and at large is made by the President. The nomination of a candidate from any Congressional district or Territory is made on the recommendation of the member or delegates from actual residents of his District or Territory.

Many members have had the good taste to permit boys from the public and private schools to compete for the vacancies in their district, but as a general thing they nominate their children, or the children of friends, or of those to whom they are under obligation for election favors rendered. Law of competition for nomination would be the true republican form of proceeding, rewarding merit, and thereby securing the ablest minds.

Examination.

Each candidate for appointment as Cadet Midshipman must present to the Academic Board satisfactory testimonials of good moral character, and must certify on honor to his precise age, which must be over fourteen and less than eighteen years at time of the examination.

Candidates must be physically sound, well-formed, and of robust constitution; they will be required to pass a satisfactory examination before a Medical Board composed of the Surgeon of the Naval Academy and two other medical officers to be designated by the Secetary of the Navy.

Any one of the following conditions will be sufficient to cause the rejection of a condidate:

Feeble constitution, inherited or acquired; greatly retarded development; decided cachexia, diathesis, or predisposition; chronic diseases that would permanently impair efficiency, viz.:

Weak intellect; cutaneous diseases; unnatural curvature of spine; torticollis or other deformity; permanent inefficiency of either of the extremities, or articulations from any cause; epilepsy; impaired vision; deafness; chronic nasal catarrah; ozena; polypi; enlargement of tonsils; impediment in speech; disease of heart or lungs, or indications to cardiac or pulmonary affections; hernia; sarcocele; hydrocele; stricture; fistula; large varicose veins of lower limbs, scrotum, or cord; chronic ulcers.

Attention will also be paid to stature. Five feet will be the minimum height for the candidate.

The candidate must pass a satisfactory examination before the Academic Board in reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, geography and English grammar.

All the examinations, except in reading, will be written. Candidates who fall below the standard willl receive a second and final examination in the subjects in which they fail. Deficiency in any one of the subjects at the second examination will be sufficient to insure rejection.

Candidates who pass the physical and mental examinations will receive appointments as Cadet Midshipmen, and become inmates of the Academy. Each Cadet will be required to sign articles by which he binds himself to serve in the United States Navy eight years (including his time of probation at the Naval Academy), unless sooner discharged. The pay of a Cadet Midshipman is $500 a year, commencing at the date of his admission.

The Cadet must be prepared to deposit $214.74 for clothing and books; the value of clothing brought from home is to be deducted from this amount.

One month after admission the Cadet Midshipman will be credited with the amount of actual expenses for traveling from his home to the Academy.

Regulations for the Appointment of Cadet Engineers in the United States Navy.

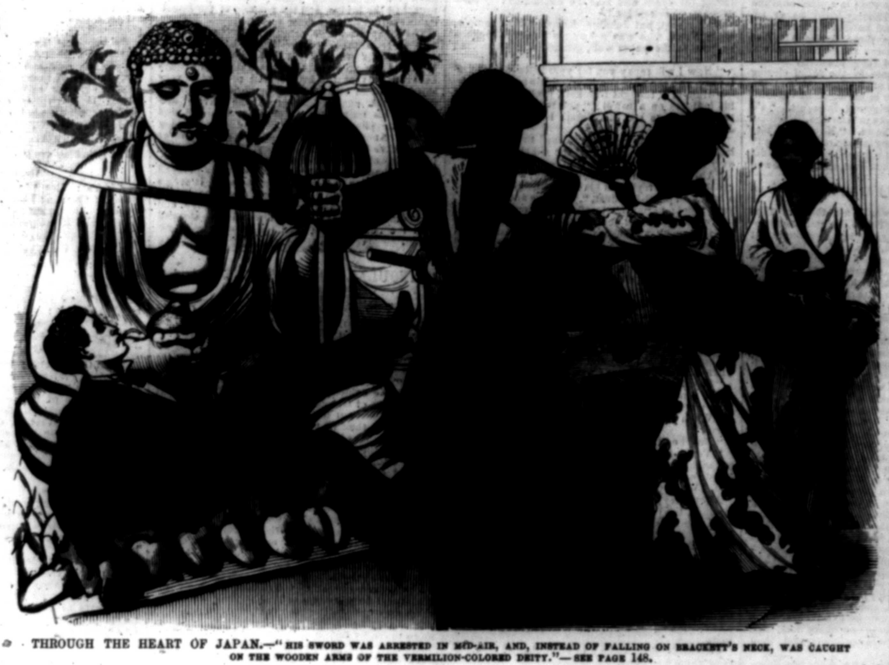
The application is to be addressed to the Secretary of the Navy, and can be made by the candidate or any person for him, and his name will be placed on the register. The registry of a name, however, gives no assurance of an appointment, and no preference will be given in selection to priority of application.

The appointments are limited to twenty-five each year. The candidate must not be less than sixteen nor more than twenty years of age; he will be required to certify on honor to his precise age, to the Academic Board, previous to his examination. His application must be accompanied by satisfactory evidence of moral character and health, with information regarding date of birth and educational advantages hitherto enjoyed. Candidates who received permission presented themselves to the Superintendent of the Naval Academy on the 15th of September for examination as to their qualifications for admission.

The course of study will comprise four years at the Academy and two additional years at sea. Cadets who finally graduate will be commissioned Assistant Engineers in the Navy as vacancies occur. The pay of a Cadet while at the Naval Academy will be $500 per annum.

The academic examination previous to appointment will be competitive, and will be on the following subjects, namely: Arithmetic; algebra; through equations of the first degree; plane geometry; rudimentary natural philosophy; reading, writing, spelling; English grammar; English composition, and geography. The candidate will also be required to exhibit a fair degree of proficiency in pencil-sketching, and to produce satisfactory evidence of mechanical aptitude, and elementary knowledge of the principles governing the action of steam-engines. Candidates who possess the greatest skill and experience in the practical knowledge of machinery, other qualifications being equal, shall have precedence for admission. The same conditions of health and stature prescribed for Cadet Midshipmen will be required of Cadet Engineers, also the same deposit of $214.74. The Marine Corps forms a part of the Navy. It is composed of a Colonel Commandant; one Colonel; two Lieutenant-Colonels; four Majors; twenty-five Captains; thirty First Lieutenants; twenty Second Lieutenants.

The privates of marines are employed as orderlies, sentinels, and at times co-operate with the army when the necessity of their assistance on shore becomes imperative.


THROUGH THE HEART OF JAPAN.—"HIS SWORD WAS ARRESTED IN MID-AIR, AND, INSTEAD OF FALLING ON BRACKETT'S NECK, WAS CAUGHT ON THE WOODEN ARMS OF THE VERMILION-COLORED DEITY."—SEE PAGE 148.

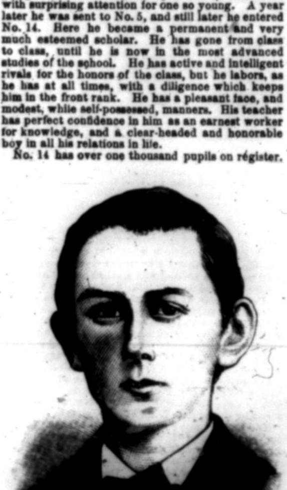
Distinguished Scholars of Brooklyn (N. Y.) Schools.

CHARLES W. WELCH,

PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 14, NAVY STREET, CORNER CONCORD STREET, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

CHARLES W. WELCH is a pupil of the highest class of Grammar School No. 14, Navy, corner Concord Street, Brooklyn, N. Y. He was born in Brooklyn, in August, 1866, and is therefore thirteen years of age. He is the son of Robert and Helen Welch. When only five years old he commenced going to school in the Primary of No. 7, and studied with surprising attention for one so young. A year later he was sent to No. 5, and still later he entered No. 14. Here he became a permanent and very much esteemed scholar. He has gone from class to class, until he is now in the most advanced studies of the school. He has active and intelligent rivals for the honors of the class, but he labors, as he has at all times, with a diligence which keeps him in the front rank. He has a pleasant face, and modest, while self-possessed, manners. His teacher has perfect confidence in him as an earnest worker for knowledge, and a clear-headed and honorable boy in all his relations in life.

No. 14 has over one thousand pupils on register.


CHARLES W. WELCH, PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 14, NAVY STREET, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

There is a small park opposite the school, which is a great advantage to the children. Benjamin Edson, M. D., has been for many years the successful Principal.

DANIEL IRWIN,

PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 7, YORK STREET, NEAR BRIDGE, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

DANIEL IRWIN is a boy of excellent standing in the first division of the first class of Grammar School No. 7, York Street, near Bridge Street, Brooklyn, N. Y. His teacher, a lady who is one of the most successful instructors connected with the Brooklyn schools, came to the platform and specially stated to us that this boy was deserving of notice for good conduct and success in study. While his standing is good in all studies, in some, as for instance, spelling, he makes a per centage of one hundred. He was born in New York, July 10th, 1866, making him thirteen years of age. He is the son of J. and Mary Irwin. When seven years old he began going to his present school in the Primary Department, and he has never attended any other. He has always worked with diligence and intelligence, and never with better results than at this time. He closed the last term with an excellent examination, and since the reopening of the school he has shown the same perseverance. He has a large head, with an amiable face.

School No. 7 has occupied its present building since 1839. Mr. C. P. Cunningham is the present efficient Principal.

◆

The Young Hero of Cape Ann;

OR,

The Fishing Trip of an American Boy.

By ROGER STARBUCK.

CHAPTER IX.

ON BOARD.

"I DON'T know about that," said George. "I am in the hopes that there are at least one or two sane men aboard."

Meanwhile the one-masted vessel drew nearer.

"Now, Tom," cried George, "by running along on the starboard-tack we can just fetch her."

"Ay, ay!" answered Tom, and he handled the sheet while George worked the tiller.

The strange vessel came rushing on.

As the vessel was rushing past, one of the occupants, in response to the young captain's request, threw a rope to him.

He caught the end, and ere the slack had run out, succeeded in securing it to the bow.

A moment later the boat was being towed rapidly by the sloop.

Old Tom pulling upon it, thus hauled the light craft under the main chains, when the three boarded e stranger.

The moment the little party gained the deck of the vessel, they were surrounded by half a dozen uncouth-looking beings.

The three fishermen could not understand a word they said.

That they were insane was evident enough.

George looked at the man at the wheel, who, to his surprise, had the quiet air of a person in full possession of his reasoning faculties.

He walked aft to this person and addressed him.

"Your men should take in that sail," he said.

"I know it," was the reply.

"You do not seem like the rest."

"Hush!" whispered the helmsman, in his ear; "it is as much as your life and mine are worth, if you go on in that way."

He gave him a significant glance and continued to steer, as if unaware of the presence of the trio.

Suddenly he cried aloud, standing on the tips of his toes and gazing forward: "Ho, ho! what a wave!" and he pointed toward it with one arm as he spoke.

That this was done to induce the lunatics to go forward George at once understood, and he was glad to see that it had the desired effect.

With ear-splitting screams the six men ran toward the bow.

"Now, then, what I have to say," said the helmsman, "must be said quickly, ere they come back. Those men are lunatics, as you have doubtless perceived. They were formerly seamen. They lost their reason through terrible hardships endured aboard an Irish fishing-craft. For a whole week they were adrift aboard a wreck of their craft without food or water. When picked up at last, it was found that their reason was gone for ever. I have also been a sailor, but of late years have been the keeper of an insane asylum. It is in the ruins of an old castle near the Irish coast. These six men were sent to my asylum.

"Three days ago, by means of a rope which they had found somewhere about the premises, they scaled the wall and made off.

"I went in search of them, hunting among the rocks of the coast for miles.

"All at once they pounced upon me from a cave, in which they had doubtless lain in wait for me, seized me, took me to a skiff, and pulled to an old craft in a concealed grotto among the cliffs.

"This is the craft we are now aboard of. They got me on deck, bound me, and then weighing anchor, they set sail, first releasing me and compelling me to take the wheel. I have vainly endeavored, by every artifice I could think of, to induce them to go below, while I was on deck, in order that I might shut them up and head the craft back to the coast."

"Do they never leave the deck? They must go below, now and then, to get something to eat."

"Yes, but the moment they are ready to go below they make me fast, and put one of their own number at the wheel. It is in that way that I have managed to catch a nap now and then; otherwise I would be completely used up by this time. Occasionally they bring me something to eat."

"I should not suppose they would know enough to do all that."

"Oh, yes. Mad people are very cunning."

"By the etarnal," cried Old Tom, "what a situation to be in!"

"It was through my influence that they were induced to throw you the rope, that you might come aboard," continued the keeper. "But, depend upon it, they will keep a sharper watch than ever, now that you are here. We will have to plan very skillfully ere we succeed in shutting them up below, if indeed we succeed at all."

"I would now ask you," said George, glancing round him, "if you know aught regarding the history of this craft? She has evidently been a schooner," he added, pointing to the sawed-off stump of another mast with which she had once been provided.

"Ay, ay; and that is all I know about her," said the keeper. "I never even saw her before I was brought aboard."

"She is not the wreck of the fishing-craft from which the lunatics were picked up?"

"No; that craft was a smaller one—a sloop."

"I also notice that this vessel's name is not upon her stern."

"No, it has been scratched off or painted over."

"If we once git below," said Old Tom, "we might come upon something which would reveal her name."

"It would cost you your life to go below," said the keeper. "Those mad people will never permit you to leave the deck."

Old Tom shrugged his shoulders.

"The prospect sartinly ain't very agreeable," he said.

"The sail should be taken in," remarked George. "The gale will burst in full fury on the craft in a few minutes."

"Yes," said the keeper, "but we cannot induce them to furl it. I have already tried my best. It would not be safe for you to undertake to do it. They would throttle you if you did."

As he spoke the lunatics were again seen to scamper aft.

They formed a ring and commenced a wild sort of dance, but not once did they remove their watchful gaze from the faces of the three sailors and the keeper.

Again George made a useless effort to induce them to furl the sails.

They only stared and burst into wild shouts of laughter.

All at once the full fury of the storm burst upon the vessel.

With a roar like the booming of a hundred cannon, it struck the craft, throwing her down on her beam ends and seeming to fairly lift her out of the sea.

The one mast bent nearly double, and swayed violently snapping and cracking, while the sail, puffed out to its greatest tension, seemed about to burst asunder.

It would have been better for the vessel had this happened, as it would have relieved her.

As it was, her bows were buried in the foaming waves, and as the water poured over her in boiling, bubbling masses, it seemed as if she must be literally "gutted" by the seas.

Old Tom took his place at the helm by the side of the steersman to assist him, while George and Steve, holding on to the shrouds, stood looking ruefully at the huge sail.

All the madmen, except one, now ran below. This person, clinging to the capstan, stood watching the four intently.

"I think I will risk taking in that sail," said George Holt to the keeper.

"Better not," was the reply. "I warn you beforehand!"

"After all," said Steve, "there are four of us, and but six of the madmen. I should think we might prove more than a match for them."

"Ay, if it came to blows, we might possibly get the better of them, but we would have to kill them before we could do it," said the keeper, "and there is the trouble. I am responsible for those madmen, and could not, therefore, permit them to be killed."

"Far be it from my intention to kill the poor fellows!" said Steve. "I thought we might succeed in binding them."

"No. Such people fight better than the sane. You would be overpowered in the attempt."

George looked round him at the seas, which were every moment increasing.

At times the vessel, lifted on the crest of a towering, rushing wave, would be carried down into the hollow beneath, struggling up from the caldron of engulfing waters only with the greatest difficulty.

The young captain realized that the fate of the craft hung upon the sail.

In ten minutes, unless she were relieved of it, she must go down.

"I will take the responsibility of ridding us of the canvas," cried the boy.

"*Better not!*" came the warning cry of the keeper again. "I am in hopes that it will blow to tatters before long."

"Not long enough to save the craft," answered George.

He snatched Steve's knife from his belt, and made his way forward through the cataracts of water pouring over the deck.

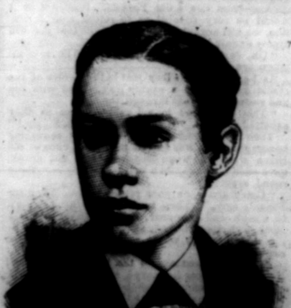
The madman on the watch let go of the capstan, and uttering a wild cry, caught up a hatchet hanging near him from a lashing on the outside of the cabin.

With the instrument uplifted, he darted after the young captain.

But he had not taken six steps, when a tremendous sea broke over the vessel—a huge wall of water, with the crash of thunder.

This overwhelming mass caught up the lunatic, bore him headlong toward the quarter, and then flung him far out to leeward on that stormy ocean.

For one brief instant, as the poor wretch was


DANIEL IRWIN, PUPIL OF GRAMMAR SCHOOL NO. 7, YORK STREET, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

THE YOUNG HERO OF CAPE ANN.—"AS THE HATCH WAS RAISED, BOTH GEORGE AND TOM HELD UP THEIR ARMS, THE CORDS OF WHICH STEVE AT ONCE CUT WITH HIS KNIFE."

whirled off into the rack, the foam and the misty spray, his form was seen leaping half way up, while his unearthly scream could be distinguished above the din of the elements. Then he disappeared and was never seen again.

Meanwhile, George had only saved himself from meeting the same fate by clinging with both arms to the rough mast, the bark of which afforded him good hold.

As the vessel shook herself clear of the engulfing torrent, he darted to the rigging, and sped swiftly up the shrouds.

He was soon on the main-topsail yard, cutting loose the yarns holding the sail to the jack-stays.

By the time he had severed six of them his work was accomplished, for the wind now ripped the rest of the sail from the spar.

With a report like thunder, the canvas, collapsing, went straight up, whirling round and round, and finally dropped into the water, far to leeward.

On hearing the cry of the madman on watch, the others in the cabin had started to come up, but the keeper now turned to Steve and shouted:

"This is your time. Run and bar the cabin door!"

Steve was about to comply, when the sea alluded to broke over the vessel, compelling him to hang on to one of the cabin lashings for his life.

The moment the sea subsided he sprang to the door, closed it, and was about to bolt it, when it was pushed open by the madmen with a violence which threw him flat upon his back.

Ere he could rise, the whole gang threw themselves upon him and tied his hands and feet from a coil of rigging near at hand.

Then they rushed upon Old Tom, hurled him against the capstan and fastened him to it also with ropes, with his face turned to leeward.

The pleadings and expostulations of the keeper were in vain.

They next ran forward, seized George just as he gained the deck, dragged him over into the schooner's head, and lashed him, face to the sea, to the leg of a wooden image, the remains of the figure-head

The keeper they did not venture to molest, but they pointed to the yard from which the sail had been cut, and threateningly shook their clinched fists in his face.

The man never winced. Still carefully working the helm, he eyed them calmly, as if not in the slightest degree disturbed by their manner.

Relieved of the huge square mainsail, the craft now righted herself, and scudding before the wind, under the keeper's good management, she rolled much less than before.

Often, however, she would plunge her bows under, greatly to the peril and discomfort of George, who, lashed as he was to the piece of figure-head, would be buried in the water with a frequency and for a sufficient length of time to almost deprive him of his breath.

Chilled by the water and benumbed by the tightness of his lashings, his sufferings became every moment more hard to endure.

Old Tom, fastened as stated to the capstan, was in a more comfortable position than his young friend. Nevertheless, he chafed under it, while he could not refrain from complaining.

"I'm darned if you would have caught me aboard this infernal craft," he said, "had I known how things were going to turn out. Them confounded lashings cut to the bone, and——"

"I would advise you to say nothing," here interrupted the keeper. "Your salvation depends on your being silent. The moment those madmen hear you speak, they are apt to knock you on the head with an ax or a crowbar."

"You don't say so? Well, I'll try to keep still, but blast me if this ain't enough to try the patience of a saint!"

"Wait until night comes. Then there may be a chance in the dark to free you all and enable you to take to your boat again."

Old Tom was about to reply, when the madmen, who had walked forward to look at George, were again seen to come aft.

The gale was still raging violently.

For hours it continued, and not until the darkness of night began to close about the craft did it show signs of abating.

By this time, George, from his prolonged, painful situation, felt faint and weak.

The violent plunging of the vessel having nearly ceased, he endeavored to unfasten the knot of his lashings. But he found he could not do this in his present position, for, although his arms were not tied, he was secured so tightly by the cords about his waist that he was unable to turn.

Darkness soon closed around him.

The gloom, except where here and there relieved by the sparkling foam, was intense.

George could hear the madmen chanting a strange, wild refrain on deck, interrupted now and then by a prolonged shriek.

All at once a figure appeared in the vessel's head.

"Who is that?" inquired George.

A wild laugh was the only response, and the boy knew it came from one of the lunatics. The man climbed down until close to the youth, when he held up before him a long knife.

George could see his eyeballs gleaming through the darkness like those of some ravenous beast.

He flourished the knife before the face of the young sailor, now and then making a motion as if about to plunge it into his throat.

Every moment George expected that he would thrust the weapon into him; but the man seemed to take pleasure in taunting him, occasionally touching his neck with the sharp point, and then withdrawing it.

All at once he seemed to have concluded to put an end to this pantomime.

He drew off with the blade and aimed a powerful blow at the boy's heart.

Although, as stated, the arms of the young captain were free, he could not, owing to his position, which prevented him from turning, use his hands against the madman, who was on one side of him.

The knife descended swiftly toward him, and the youth gave himself up for lost.

But at that moment the schooner rolled suddenly, and the man, losing his balance, the sharp point went past the intended victim, just grazing his ribs.

With a shriek his tormentor, unable to recover himself, pitched forward off his feet, and fell headlong into the sea.

For an instant the boy, looking down, saw his upraised hand; then the schooner rushing on, passed over him, and he was never seen again.

"Man overboard!" shouted George, several times, but amidst the roaring of the wind and sea, and the unearthly din which the crazy men on deck were making, his voice was not heard.

Another hour had passed, when the four madmen remaining appeared in the head.

They unlashed George, dragged him on deck, and bound his feet securely with stout cords. Then they pulled him to the side of the vessel and pitched him into the sea.

The boy threw up his hands, and they came in contact with the gunwale of the boat still fast to the vessel. Into this, as the speed of the schooner was now much slackened by the abating of the gale, he at last succeeded, with much difficulty, in drawing himself. Faint and exhausted by the hardships he had undergone, he lay for some moments in the bottom of the light craft.

Then he bethought himself of the knife with which he had cut loose the sail, and which he had afterward thrust into his belt.

It was still there.

He drew it, and with it he soon severed the lashings about his ankles. He was about to rise, when he heard the voice of Old Tom.

"Hold on there, you 'tarnal fool! Why do you want to pitch me overboard? Hold on! hold on, I say! Hello! Here I go! Confound it!"

Then there was a splash, as the body of the speaker struck the sea.

George leaned over the side of the boat and caught Old Tom by the hair, as he was drifting past it.

"Well, now, by the eternal ——" began Tom, but George checked his further utterance.

"Hist! they will hear you!" he said.

"My hands and feet are both tied," said Tom, in a lower voice. "I cannot help myself a particle."

The young captain, exerting himself to the utmost, succeeded at last in pulling his friend into the boat.

"Phew!" gasped Tom, as he sank down across a thwart, "if this doesn't beat all! It don't seem possible I'm saved yet!"

With his knife George severed his lashings, and Tom now sat upright.

"I swear to gracious! I'm glad enough to git out of that infarnal crazy craft! If you ever catch me among lunatics again, then you can bile me in a trypot!"

"It has been a narrow escape," said George.

"Narrow don't express it, my boy. It has been one of the darnedest situations that ever a human being was poked into. There was them devils, arter they put you in the bow, dancing around me, pulling my hair, my nose and eyelashes, and not content with that, the cussed scamps must pick up a saw and beat me over the starn with it, until I felt as if there was none of it left."

"We had better lie down in the boat, that we may not be seen," said George.

"Ay, ay, my boy; the Lord save us from getting in the power of those un'arthly creatures again!"

They stretched themselves on the bottom of the boat, expecting that Steve would be next tossed into the sea.

Nor were they mistaken.

The form of their shipmate soon descended into the water.

They both clutched him and drew him into the boat.

But scarcely had George cut his lashings, when a yell above them betokened that the three in the boat had been seen.

One of the madmen seized the warp and drew the light craft close alongside.

The others soon appeared with a heavy block, which, just as George severed the warp with his knife, they threw down upon the boat.

It struck the forward part with a crash and rolled over into the sea.

"Darnation!" cried Tom; "the boat is stoven!"

"Not badly, I hope," said George.

The schooner gliding on, disappeared in the darkness, the receding yells of the lunatics still ringing on the ears of the three sailors.

Tom drew a long breath of relief.

"We are at least out of the clutches of those scamps," he said, "and it is a mercy we are, even though our boat goes to the bottom ten minutes arterward."

George felt of the planks of the boat, and discovered that they were badly cracked.

The water came in fast.

He set Steve to bailing, while he cut off a strip of the lug-sail, with which he hoped he would be able to stop the leak.

But all his efforts were useless.

The water kept gaining, although Steve plied the bailer rapidly.

Soon, despite the exertions of the three, the water was up to their ankles.

"This will never do," said Old Tom. "We will soon have no boat under us. Better turn it over and git astride of it on the outside."

"That is the best we can do," said George.

They got out of the boat, turned it upside down, and sat astraddle on the bottom.

"What unfortunate creatures we are!" said Tom. "Such is life. My starn feels as if there was no life in it. What with being first scorched by fire and then beaten with that infarnal saw, it is still in a state of collapse."

"It will soon recover," said George.

"It ought to, if there's any virtue in salt water."

"We will never reach the coast of Ireland at this rate," said Steve.

"No, we are far from it yet," said George.

Hours passed.

Adrift in the darkness on the wide ocean, the three weary castaways anxiously watched for the dawn, in the hope of seeing some friendly sail.

At last the gray light stole over the waters

The wind had abated to a moderate breeze, and there was but little sea.

The watchers scanned the vast expanse far and near.

No sign of a sail.

Their hearts sank within them.

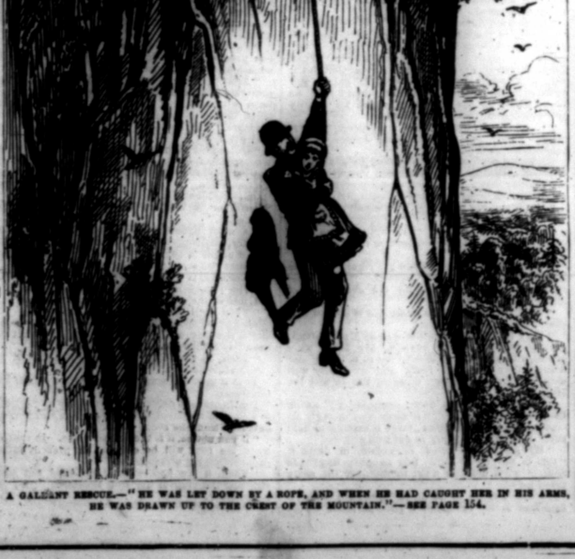
Thoroughly exhausted and half parched with thirst, they now could scarcely keep their bodies upright.

"What will become of us, the Lord only knows," said Tom. "But cheer up. We won't despair, while there's a bit of the boat left."

"No, we have still the long day before us to see a sail in," said George.

Another hour had passed, and the sun was lifting his blood-red disk above the edge of the sea, when, in the crimson pathway of light, which fell athwart the ocean, Old Tom's keen gaze was suddenly caught by a small, dark speck.

"Either my eyes deceive me or there is sartinly



A GALLANT RESCUE.—"HE WAS LET DOWN BY A ROPE, AND WHEN HE HAD CAUGHT HER IN HIS ARMS, HE WAS DRAWN UP TO THE CREST OF THE MOUNTAIN."—SEE PAGE 154.

something thereaway!" he said, pointing toward the object.

Both George and Steve looked in the indicated direction.

As they gradually drifted toward the object they noticed another, just astern of it.

"It is only a flock of birds," said Steve, hopelessly.

"I am afraid so," said George.

Then he raised himself on his knees to obtain a better view.

As he did so, a white column-like object was suddenly raised from the foremost speck.

"Sail oh!" shouted George, in a ringing voice.

"God bless you, boy," cried Tom, joyfully; "you don't say so?"

"Ay, ay, Old Tom, look for yourself. You can see it now."

"Yes, yes, I see it."

Then his countenance fell.

"What if it should prove to be that infarnal colony Britisher? There are two craft, you know. One may be our own schooner and t'other the Briton."

Again he looked at the sail, leaning forward for a keener survey.

Then he clapped his thorny palms together with a cry of joy.

"Ay, ay, my boy!" he shouted; "we are all right. It is not the sail of a large craft; it is that of a boat. The mist thereaway makes it seem to be larger than it is. *It* is our two boats we see."

"Thank God!" cried George.

"They are coming this way," said Steve. "They doubtless see us."

George waved his handkerchief about his head as a signal.

A piece of bunting, fluttering from the masthead of the boat, betokened that the signal was seen.

"They have a good spy-glass in that boat," said Tom, "and they must have seen us before we saw them."

Both boats now had their sails up.

Nearer and nearer they drew, and soon all doubts were at rest.

The forms in the boats could be seen, among them those of two females.

"Jenny and Miss Palmer!" cried Old Tom.

Half an hour later the boats were alongside of the wrecked one, and the three castaways were shaking hands with their shipmates.

(To be continued.)

A GALLANT RESCUE.

LITTLE EMMA PULLIAN, a ten-year-old of Augusta, Ga., was taken by her mother one day recently to Stone Mountain, and before it was known that she had strayed from her friends, she lost her way on the mountain side. The point where she was at last descried was over one hundred feet from the top, with a perpendicular fall of fifty feet just above her, and 1,500 feet or more below her. She was resting on a narrow ledge of rock, scarcely large enough to hold her; in fact, she maintained her position by thrusting her fingers in the crevices among the lichens growing there. Few men would have ventured to attempt a rescue, but George H. Goldsmith volunteered to do it. He was let down by a rope, and when he had caught her in his arms, he was drawn up to the crest of the mountain. Little Emma said that while strolling about she slipped, and fell to the point where the ledge stopped her descent. To let go was to fall, and she held on.

TOPSY-TURVY;

OR,

The Boy Explorer,

AND

THE WORLD TURNED INSIDE OUT.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE "MAGNETIC POLE," AND THE "JEANNETTE" IN A FIX.

"SAM," said Wilcox, one morning, as the two were walking the deck together; "how do you get on as a primary school teacher?"

Sam reddened to the ears.

"Primary school teacher, yourself—what do you mean?"

"How does Miss Copper-face progress in her studies?"

"You be hanged!"

"No, but honestly, I feel a warm interest in the young lady and in yourself. You see, it's the first case of bringing the New York public school system to the North Pole, and I expect to report the affair to the Board of Education when we get home."

"Oh, bother! You don't know anything about education; you stick to the newspaper business. Why don't you start a daily aboard ship?"

"A good idea; will you write for it?"

"No, but I'll subscribe, and I'll advertise."

"What'll you advertise? But I know—grand circus. Sam Greenough, the wonderful gorilla-hunter of the North Pole. The great cave-explorer and gold-finder."

"Just so. Assisted by Mr. Theodore Wilcox, the lightning-calculator. Shows how fast a boat goes in a current with a drag out——"

"Oh, I say, that is too much. You got sold in the same way in your boat. But tell me, no joking, how does Tolula get on with her English?"

"Well, then, if it's really no joking——"

"Honor bright."

"Why, she can talk first-class. You see, we've had a good many more lessons than anybody supposes."

"Oh, yes," said the irrepressible Wilcox, "but you needn't think you've deceived me. I've seen you stowed away under the long-boat; she with the book in her lap, and learning a good deal more flirtation than she did English."

"Gammon! but you just try her. Ask her some simple questions."

"I will. I'll ask her what she thinks has become of the Magnetic Pole; if she answers that, I'll join the class."

"That's just the question I wish she would answer—whoever you are talking about," and here Lieutenant De Vergne joined the two young men in their walk.

"I can tell you," he continued, "affairs are 'topsy-turvy' indeed, for just about here is where we ought to find Prince Albert Land and the Magnetic Pole, and there hasn't been a sign of land since we left the Great Fish River."

"My dear fellow," said Wilcox, "has the island in question disappeared?"

"Gone completely."

"Then you've answered your own question. If the island's gone, of course it has taken the Magnetic Pole with it."

Sam roared at this, and the lieutenant, who was rather of a sedate turn, nevertheless, could not help joining him.

"The trouble is," continued the lieutenant, presently, "this place ought to be colder than anything we have encountered, and it is, on the contrary, growing warmer every day."

"Well, who cares?" said Wilcox. "I don't; I have had all the cold weather I want. I can tell you if you had been snowed up there in Valentia Island where we were, you wouldn't grumble because you didn't find ice and snow just where you expected to. Besides, it is just what Captain St. Clair has said all along, that——"

"Land, ho!" cried Sam.

"Confound that boy!" said Captain Wortendyke, at his elbow. "He's always discovering something. Where is it, Sam?"

Just then the lookout called out:

"Land on the port bow!"

The commander went forward with his glass, and in a few moments what appeared to be a tall, black rock rising directly out of the water, was seen about two miles away, in the direction indicated.

The steersman had changed the course of the steamer in response to an order from the chief officer, and had noticed with what curious ease her head had swung round in answer to the rudder.

The *Jeannette* was now under a slight head of steam as well as canvas, and her speed seeming to be accelerated as she neared the rock, the commander rang the bell to "slow her."

Still she kept on at a tremendous rate.

"Keep her off two points," shouted the chief officer.

"Ay, ay, sir."

"Well, why don't you?" he called out again, as she headed the same.

"She won't mind her helm, sir."

"Thunder, it must be fouled with something."

The *Jeannette* was now tearing along at a terrible rate, though there was little or no wind, and her engine was slowed down to half speed.

"Stop her! Back her!" rang out the commander's bell, and the order being obeyed, the steamer's speed slackened somewhat. "Any current here?" he continued, to the sailing-master, who stood near.

"Nothing much, sir. Not over three knots."

"Is that rudder fouled?" hailed the commander.

"No, sir," responded the chief officer. "All right aft."

"Call all hands to cast anchor."

The boatswain's whistle piped all hands; the men rushed to the windlass, and in a few moments the heavy anchor was in the water.

"Heave the lead, quartermaster."

The order was obeyed.

"How do you make it?"

"Sixteen fathoms, sir."

The *Jeannette* came to anchor with her nose not twenty feet from the curious rock which Sam had discovered.

This rock was perfectly black, stood about fifteen feet out of water, and was not more than ten feet through at the base, and half that at the top. It was irregular, though nearly cone-shaped.

"Funny idea to anchor here," said Wilcox.

A group of the officers and passengers stood at the bow conversing.

"Sam," said Lieutenant Jasper, who was passing, "lend me your knife to cut a piece of tobacco."

Sam took his knife from his pocket, and handed it to the lieutenant. The latter, after using it, laid the knife on the rail, saying:

"There's your knife; thank you."

Sam put out his hand to take it, when lo! it had disappeared.

The boy looked in amazement.

"Wilcox, did you take that knife?"

"No. Didn't you see Jasper lay it down beside you on the rail?"

"Yes, I did—but it's gone."

And it was gone. And though they hunted for ten minutes, it was not found.

A little later Pierre came out of the caboose with an iron ladle in his hand, and seeing Wilcox and Sam engaged in looking for something about the deck, asked what was lost, and, on being told, joined the others in searching for it.

Just then Terence Queeny came up from below.

"Terence," said Pierre, "put that ladle over on the barrel, while I look for the knife; and he handed it to the Irishman, who placed it carefully on the barrel.

The next moment a wild yell from Terence split the air.

"Holy Mother!" he cried; "will ye look at that?"

The Irishman pointed as he spoke to the top of the rock, and every one, roused by his cry, looked where he pointed.

Was this witchcraft?

Clinging to the side of the black rock were the cook's iron ladle and Sam's knife.

For a moment there was blank silence. Then the fat figure of Professor Corbeau waddled to the rail, and, while he roared with laughter, and pointed to the curious sight on the black rock, he vainly strove to say something, which his hilarity prevented from becoming articulate.

"What is it, old man?" queried Wilcox, irreverently. "Pat him on the back, Jasper—you're nearest—or he'll have a fit."

Here the professor was attacked by a fit, actually—of coughing—and Lieutenant Jasper applied the remedy suggested, which speedily succeeded in restoring him to his voice and his equanimity.

"Don't you see what it is?" he cried, at length. "Why, it's a lodestone."

Here Captain St. Clair came up, with the commander and the others, and took in the situation at a glance.

"There is no doubt but you are right," said the commander to Professor Corbeau. "It is lodestone; and that accounts for the *Jeannette* not answering her helm."

"Why, Commander, the *Jeannette* is not an iron ship," said Captain St. Clair.

"Very true; but when she was at Mare Island, getting ready for this voyage, her bows were armed with iron plates, to save her in the ice; and though they have got rusty, and are pretty well used up, there is enough of them left to feel the attraction."

"But what is to be done, commander?" asked Lieutenant De Vergne. "If there was enough attraction to bring her here, there is enough to hold her. How are you going to get away?"

"My gracious!" cried Emmeline, in despair, "this is the worst yet. You naughty boy"—to Sam—"what did you want to discover the nasty thing for?"

"I didn't mean to do do it," said Sam, with his knuckles in his eyes, and a good imitation of the deepest penitence; "it went and got right in the way."

This dialogue made the situation ludicrous, and as was usual with these light-hearted voyagers, they forgot the seeming peril, or only remembered it to be certain that they would get out of it in some way, as they had escaped from so many before.

"Do you know," said Lieutenant De Vergne to Doctor Beaumont, a few minutes after, "this is a most extraordinary discovery. It is perfectly ridiculous to say so, but it looks as if this must be the Magnetic Pole."

Doctor Beaumont smiled.

"Then you conclude it is not an imaginary point, after all?"

"I don't know what to conclude. But I see the commander has taken the sun, and we will presently find out the exact latitude and longtitude." And then the two gentlemen followed the commander to the cabin, where he proceeded to work out the ship's reckoning.

None of the gentlemen were very much surprised to discover that the lodestone rock was in the exact locality ascribed by the books to the Magnetic Pole, being evidently a part of Prince Albert Land which had remained above water when the rest of the island had followed the example of its neighbors in being submerged.

"Do you suppose, commander, that the rest of the island was magnetic?" asked Captain St. Clair.

"That is precisely what I am going to find out," he replied; and he rose and went on deck, followed by the others.

Immediately he gave the order to take up the anchor, and the men went to the windlass with a will.

For a few moments, while the slack was being drawn in, the windlass went round merrily, then it suddenly stopped.

"Round with her," cried the boatswain; "she's only stuck a little."

But though the men tugged till their muscles cracked, the anchor would not budge.

"That will do," said the commander, and "'Vast heaving!" shouted the boatswain, and the men rested from their labor, panting and perspiring.

"Quartermaster, heave the lead; put it right by that anchor."

The lead went down, and as the cord slackened, the quartermaster sung out in his monotonous voice:

"Seventy-two fathom, sir."

"Take in, and let me have a look at it."

The lead came up, and the commander carefully inspected it.

"Clean as a whistle. Just as I expected."

"Well, commander?" queried Captain St. Clair.

"Gentlemen, I can answer your question. The island is magnetic under water, and that is what is the matter with my anchor."

There was a murmur of astonishment.

"Is it possible," asked Mrs. St. Clair, "that the attraction can be strong enough to hold that great anchor, in spite of the efforts of a dozen strong men?"

"Yes, or fifty, madam," replied the commander.

"Then how *are* you going to get away?" inquired the impulsive Emmeline.

The commander smiled.

"My dear young lady, I shall circumvent the enemy.

And the next morning all on board were interested spectators of the commander's method of circumventing the enemy.

All hands were told off into boats, and with all the tools they could employ, were busily engaged in wrenching off the iron plating from the ships bow.

The work was not very difficult nor very laborious, for the iron was pretty far gone, and came off easily.

As each piece smaller than four or five pounds in weight, was broken off, it flew to the lodestone rock, where it clung firmly. Heavier sheets fell into the water, only to meet with a similar fate on the rocks far below.

It took two days to "skin" the ship, as Sam called it. Underneath the iron, her timbers were found to be in splendid condition.

Of course the subject of the Magnetic Pole was now constantly up for discussion, and many were the curious arguments employed to account for the absence of an "ice period" from this locality, where, according to all science, should certainly have been one.

It was reserved for Lieutenant De Vergne to offer the explanation of this phenomenal occurrence, which was finally accepted by the rest as correct and conclusive.

After all, this was sufficiently simple.

"You see, gentlemen," he said, "we have been reasoning from the wrong end."

"How so?" asked Captain St. Clair.

"Why, the theory is that magnetism is strongest at a low temperature. Granted. Further, the Magnetic Pole is always associated, and found in connection, with the coldest climate known. Granted again.

"But now, instead of assuming that the magnetism produces the cold, why not say that the cold occasions the magnetism?

"After that, the conclusion is easily reached. The remarkable climatic change, to which we have all been witnesses, has altered the location of that point in the northern hemisphere of lowest temperature. The Magnetic Pole has simply followed that point.

"Instead of taking the number of years which would ordinarily have been required to perform this journey, it has been done at a bound. A few months since, the Magnetic Pole was where we stand. Suddenly, in a few hours, it is in Eastern Siberia, or in Western Europe. Presto, change. That is all."

"A most ingenious explanation," said the commander, admiringly; "and if it is not the correct one, it ought to be. But there is one point, lieutenant, that you seem to forget."

"And what is that? I am ready to be corrected."

"The presence of this highly magnetized obelisk, and of the magnetism in the rock beneath us."

"Very well put, commander, but easily answered. I admit the magnetism in the rock yonder, and in that below the water; but it is only what has been left behind, and is merely temporary."

"Then, do you think it will leave this rock?"

"Most decidedly."

At that moment something fell with a splash into the water.

The lieutenant pointed triumphantly at the track of a sinking fragment of the iron which had become detached from the rock.

"If you notice, it is the largest piece. In another week the rock will be clear of its present rather comical-looking attachments."

"Then, if we had waited, we need not have stripped the ship of her iron sheathing," said the commander.

"Precisely."

"Well," rejoined the other, laughing, as he turned to go aft, "I think I would rather have taken my chances without it, though I admit you were proved right to some extent, by the piece which fell into the water."

And just then, as if to punctuate his sentence, another fragment toppled off the side of the lodestone rock, and followed its companion.

The commander had gone aft for a purpose, and was presently seen in close conversation with his second in command.

A little later the chief officer gave his orders, the boatswain piped all hands, and the men were soon again tugging at the windlass. But the anchor did not stir, and as the *Jeannette* was well supplied with the article, the order was given to slip the cable, which ran through the hausehole and disappeared beneath the water.

The steamer never moved.

"That is all right," said the commander, rubbing his hands; "I did not know but the iron there is on board might have held her."

"Get up steam," he continued, "and let us get under way. If any of you young folks want to go ashore and knock off some bits of that rock for curiosities, now is your time."

"That's a good idea," drawled Wilcox; "I've got a piece of the North Pole, and I only want a piece of the Magnetic Pole to make my museum complete."

"And have you really got a piece of that terrible place?" inquired Mrs. St. Clair.

"Yes, Sam and I put a few bits of rock in our pockets, and brought them away with us. Got your's, Sam?"

"You bet," was the classical response of that enterprising youth.

"Is that the kind of English you are teaching Tolula?" said Mrs. St. Clair, reprovingly.

"No, ma'am," answered Sam, blushing; "it slipped out. When I'm teaching her I'm on my dig——I mean, I'm more careful."

Mrs. St. Clair shook her finger at him, and Sam ran to enter the boat, which was already at the side of the steamer, with Wilcox in it, waiting.

A few strokes brought them to the base of the rock, and Sam leaped to a projecting shelf—the only point that offered standing room.

"Go up higher, Sam," said the *Herald* correspondent, "and then hold the painter while I go."

Sam started to do so, but to his horror he could not move either of his feet.

His astonishment and terror at this situation were so great that he roared in affright, and would certainly have pitched head-foremost into the water, if Wilcox had not sprung to the bow of the boat and steadied him.

"What's the matter with you? What are you trying to do?" cried the *Herald* correspondent, who was doing his best to hold up Sam, steady the boat, and keep his own balance.

"I can't move my feet," cried Sam, solemnly; and by this time he had grasped a projecting fragment of the rock, which gave Wilcox a chance to look after the boat and himself.

And it was well that this happened; for when Wilcox heard Sam's remark, so full of anxiety and misgiving, the truth struck him, and he dropped in the bottom of the boat, where he rolled over and over, screaming with laughter.

"Oh, it's very funny, no doubt. I wish it was you. Oh, hang it! come, help a fellow, won't you? Don't lay there, screeching like a ninny. See Miss Emmeline looking at you!"

This started Wilcox to his feet, only to find that the last statement was a ruse of Sam's to bring him to himself and obtain his assistance.

"Why, don't you know what's the matter you ignorant young savage?"

"No more a savage than yourself. What *is* the matter?"

"After all you've been taught lately about magnetism," pursued his tormentor. "Pretty fellow you are to start a primary school in the North Pole and a school of mines on an Arctic island?"

"Oh, cut it! *Won't* you help a fellow?"

"Sam, you surprise me. Haven't you got nails in your shoes?"

"Yes, great big ones."

"Take them off—I mean the shoes, not the nails—and your escape will be imminent."

"How am I going to take my shoes off when I can't move my feet?

"You can move your hands, can't you? But your hands *are* pretty well occupied. I guess I'll have to give you a lift."

So Wilcox stepped to the bow of the boat again, and using his oar as a paddle, was soon beside the rock, when, by untying the boy's shoes, he was enabled to withdraw his feet from them. But no amount of pulling would stir the shoes, and they were left behind.

Disencumbered of them, however, Sam easily climbed to the top of the rock, where he waved his hat over his head in triumph, while Emmeline complimented him from her station on the steamer.

Sam managed to break off a few small fragments of the rock, and he also succeeded in regaining possession of his knife, and, at Pierre Flamont's earnest request, of the basting-ladle. Then he clambered down, and with a last wrench at his shoes, which was ineffectual, dropped into the boat, and they pulled on board the steamer just in time, for steam was up, and in a few moments she had left the lodestone-rock and was steaming northwestward toward Behring's Straits.

* * * * * *

"Commander," said the quartermaster, a few days later, as the former sat on the quarter-deck conversing, "this current is sharpening up a bit."

"What do you make it now, quartermaster?"

"About eight knots, sir."

"Well, tell the engineer to let down the fire and we'll take advantage of it."

"Curious thing, this current," said Captain Wortendyke. "Only a few months ago my boat came up on it at racehorse speed, and now we are returning the same way and by the same current. I can't understand it."

"I think I can see through it," said Lieutenant De Vergne, "though, if you remember, you gave me my first lesson in ocean currents."

"And I shall be very glad to take a lesson from you now. Indeed, you owe me one, and as I am actually non-plussed, why, let us have it."

"If you recollect," the lieutenant went on, "when we passed through Behring's Straits, we hugged the western shore, or the east coast of Asia, very closely."

"Yes, you are right there."

"And when we had passed through the four hundred miles, or thereabouts, of strait, we made a wide offing, describing a bow, which took us to westward and then along the coast of Wrangel Land, shunning that of Alaska, until we had gone eastward some hundreds of miles."

"I remember all that, perfectly," responded Captain Wortendyke.

"Now, my idea is that this tendency northward has continued in the case of the current all the way round, until its original direction has been turned by the motion of the earth and other causes, and it has set back in the same way it came, but keeping nearer the coast of the continent than it did in its northward passage."

"And you think?"

"That we shall enter Behring's Straits on the American side, and continue on that side all the way down the coast."

"I shouldn't wonder if you were right," said Captain Wortendyke.

"'The proof of the pudding is the eating thereof,'" said Wilcox.

"Yes," added the commander; "and it is certain we are enjoying your 'current-pudding' now."

At which pun, the first ever known to have been made by the commander, there was a general laugh.

Just then Sam came up with something in his hand, which proved to be the box that he had found at "Jeannette" Island when he was out fishing with Doctor Beaumont, and which had first put the idea in his head to watch for a passing vessel—an idea which resulted in his daily visits to the bluff, and his final observation of the steamer as she approached the island.

"What have you there, my boy?" inquired the commander.

Sam explained the circumstance—which, as it happened, had been forgotten among the thousand-and-one incidents that had occurred since—and produced also the Danish Bible, which had been one of the articles contained in the box. Sam modestly suggested that the latter and its contents might have been the property of one of the sailors on board the *Jeannette*.

"Quite likely, my lad," said the commander; "and we will have the quartermaster up and inquire."

The quartermaster was accordingly called, and on being asked the question, if the box belonged to one of the men, recognized it at once. The Danish sailor in question was then sent for, and at once recognized his property. He had been using it, he said, and had placed it on the rail, when a brush with his elbow had sent it overboard.

Sam volunteered, rather gleefully, to collect his scattered property, and went about with much amusement to replevin it from Wilcox, Jasper and Greenough, among whom it had been divided, Sam himself having fallen in possession of the box and the Bible. The entire property was surrendered to the sailor, who expressed great delight at having it restored to him.

Three weeks after leaving the lodestone rock, the *Jeannette* sighted Port Hope, on the extreme north-west coast of Alaska, and immediately followed the current and entered Behring's Straits.

(To be continued.)

"Topsy-Turvy" was commenced in No. [illegible]

Young Pickwick's Schooldays.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

(Continued from page 142.)

"WHAT?"

"I think the mansion here is going to be attacked to-night."

"Bolts and bars!" exclaimed the Diddler; "why think so?"

"Well, as I was approaching the gate, I saw a cart draw up close alongside the hedge, with two rough-looking men in it."

"Suspicious—very—well?"

"Well, I slipped quietly past without their seeing me, and hurried in at the gate. But I hadn't been there long before I caught sight of them again."

"In the grounds?"

"Yes. Crouching down behind a clump of bushes."

"Phew!" whistled the Diddler; "poor Tubbs!—awkward, very—can't help him—shut up here—pity—but own fault."

At this juncture footsteps were heard on the gravel in the distance.

"Hish!" exclaimed Fitzsham, in a hasty whisper; "they're coming this way, I think."

Fitzsham vanished.

The Diddler closed the window, and at once roused his comrades by sundry digs and pinches in the ribs.

"Wake up!" he exclaimed; "danger—peril—breakers ahead—wake!"

"What's the matter?" they asked. "Is it the doctor?"

"Doctor! No, an attack on the house."

This startling announcement was sufficient to make the hearers wide awake in an instant.

"Where are they?" inquired the boys, eagerly.

"Outside," replied the Diddler; "st!—mum!" he whispered. "No noise—betray ourselves."

A dead silence instantly prevailed, and almost directly footsteps were heard on the gravel, and the handle of the door was turned softly.

"Out of sight!—vanish!" enjoined the Diddler, in an undertone.

The place were they were confined was an old stable which had fallen into disuse.

But the stalls still remained, and it was now used as a receptacle for straw and hay, of which there was a considerable quantity.

Behind this it was easy to conceal themselves, and in a few seconds not one of them was to be seen.

The voices of the men were now audible.

"This is the spot," said one of them; "just give us a leg, Bill, to see if it's all clear."

The next moment the light from a lantern gleamed in through the window, and then disappeared again.

"Why, they're coming in here!" whispered Bob Fairfit to the Diddler; "what do they want in this stable?"

"Don't know—shall presently," was the Diddler's brief reply.

At this juncture the lock gave way under the wrenching it received.

The door opened, and two men entered.

Rough-looking fellows with pale faces, and chins covered with a beard of a week's growth, which added to their dirty appearance.

"All right, so far, Sammy," remarked one of them, as he looked round and saw nothing but trusses of hay and straw, little dreaming what they concealed; "and here's the spot where we must go to work."

As he spoke, he pointed to a particular part of the wall.

"Is it down in the map?" asked Sam.

"Yes," returned the other, taking a piece of paper from his pocket, on which was drawn a rough plan of the house; "see, 'ere it is; and here's the place where he keeps the documents."

"Right you are. Now, then, we can go to work."

With this the men began their operations upon the wall with a crowbar.

The bricks came away readily, and the side of the house was quickly arrived at.

It was not so easy to break through this, but in the course of half an hour they had made a hole large enough to admit their bodies.

Through this they crept, and made their way into the interior.

As soon as they disappeared, Fitzsham entered the stable.

"By Jove!" he exclaimed, aghast at the demolition of the wall; "have they got in?"

"Yes," replied the Diddler, cheerfully; "nothing could be better; we follow—quiet as mice—collar these fellows—Tubbs's life preserved—eternal gratitude—and so on."

"I'm ready," said Pickwick, boldly.

"So am I," added Fitzsham.

"And I! and I!" echoed the rest.

"Brave boys!" exclaimed the Diddler, approvingly; "come on!"

"Oh! what's to be done with Swags?" suddenly asked young Pickwick.

"Swags—no use—stay where he is—sleep—snore—out of way—good job, too."

The rest coinciding fully with this opinion, the Diddler said:

"Ready?"

"Yes, all."

"Then follow me—tread light—sh!"

With these precautionary injunctions the Diddler crawled through the hole in the wall, and his companions followed.

"Now, then, for the upper regins," said one of the intruders; "old Tubby's room's th' fust one on the right, I think."

"May as well be sure," responded Sam, and forthwith proceeded to refer to the map.

Having satisfied themselves on this point, they strode silently toward the stairs.

As they passed a recess where the boys lay crouching, the Diddler looked out, and taking hold of the end of a dark object that protruded from the pocket of the nearest to him, drew it skillfully forth.

It proved to be an awfully heavy life-preserver, but looked more like a life-destroyer.

"Ha, ha!—one for his nob!" chuckled the Diddler, as he thrust it into his vest and buttoned his coat over it.

After waiting a few moments he motioned to his companions to follow him.

They, in the meantime, had made a hasty excursion into the lower offices, and possessed themselves of whatever weapons came first to hand.

These consisted of a warming-pan, an old blunderbuss, a cavalry sword very much rusted, a rolling-pin and a cook's chopper.

Armed with these, in a state of excitement they could scarcely suppress, they followed the Diddler up-stairs.

The door of Mr. Tubbs's bedroom was partly open, and the intruders had already entered.

Sundry nasal sounds from within the curtains of the massive four-poster proved that the proprietor and his better half were sound asleep.

The Diddler pointed to a goodly array of bells that were suspended from the wall in the corridor, and he whispered to Tinkle:

"Keep ears open—when call out—ring—lot—like old boots."

"All right," responded Tinkle.

They listened. All was silent.

But presently a female voice was heard to exclaim:

"Tomkin! Tomkin! I'm sure there's some one in the room! get up!"

"Eh, what?" replied the deeper tones of Mr. Tubbs; "some one where?"

"In our bedroom," responded Mrs. T.; "and—ah, see! men!" she shrieked.

"Ah, scoundrels!" cried Mr. Tubbs, rolling himself out of bed and almost pitching on his nose.

The boys took this opportunity to slip in at the door.

The men, startled from their operations, at once seized Mr. Tubbs.

"Help! murder!" he shouted.

"Murder! help!" joined in his terrified spouse.

A hand was quickly placed over the mouth of Mr. Tubbs.

Mrs. Tubbs gasped and clutched the bed-curtains and Mr. Tubbs fell on his knees.

"Mercy!" he implored; "you wouldn't kill a man of my years, would you?"

"Oh, no; don't kill him for—for my sake," entreated Mrs. T.

"Tell me where the papers are," said the man.

"You'll find them in a tin box beneath the bed," groaned Mr. Tubbs.

This was more than Mrs. T. could bear, and she shrieked loudly:

"Help, mur-ur-der!"

"Quiet her!" yelled Sam.

His colleague rushed to the bed, but was met by the Diddler, who, starting up, felled him to the ground with his own club.

Young Pickwick at the same moment sprang toward the man called Sam, and brought down the rolling-pin he carried with such good effect on his sconce, that he, too, measured his length on the carpet.

The two ruffians lay stunned and prostrate side by side.

It took but an instant to bind them hand and foot with some strong clothes-line, which they had picked up as they came along.

In the meantime the bells, agitated by Tinkle, sent forth such a prolonged clamor that the entire household was aroused, and came hurrying to see what was the matter.

Mr. Tubbs had taken the opportunity to envelop himself in his dressing-gown, and having staggered to his easy-chair, sank into it, and sat gazing vacantly at the assembled throng like one in a dream.

His eyes rested at first on the Diddler, and then glanced away to his companions, and then back to the Diddler again, in profound bewilderment.

At length a light seemed to break in upon him.

"Why, I declare it is, it must be!" he suddenly burst out.

The Diddler gave him one of his knowing smiles, just to encourage him, and nodded.

These expressive acts served still further to enlighten Mr. Tubbs, and he said, presently:

"Aren't you the—er—young gentlemen I ordered to be locked up?"

"We are!" replied the Diddler, in a solemn and reproachful tone.

"We are!" echoed his companions, imitating him.

Mr. Tubbs exhibited considerable embarassment.

"It was you, also, who frustrated the designs of those scoundrels, who intended to rob me of papers of great importance in a lawsuit in which I am plaintiff, and saved my life?" he continued.

"It was!" the Diddler responded.

"And my life as well!" exclaimed the smothered voice of Mrs. Tubbs, as she popped her white night-cap from beneath the bedclothes; "we owe our safety to those brave youths."

"We do," admitted Mr. T., "I feel we do; and I—I locked them up without their suppers," he added, in a reflective, penitential tone.

"Never mind, old boy!" said the Diddler, cheerily, "all right, now—no bones broke—let bygones be bygones—forget supper—make it up at breakfast—bear no malice—give us your hand."

Mr. Tubbs, affected almost to tears, extended his palm.

The Diddler grasped it with effusion.

"Noble host—bids welcome," he said, turning to his comrades; "sorry for past conduct—penitence—remorse—and so on—must forgive him."

And so the nine trespassers, at the intercession of their leader, did magnanimously forgive Mr. Tomkin Tubbs, and shook his hand so heartily in confirmation of the fact that, by the time the shaking was over, he scarcely knew whether he had any fingers at all.

The two ruffians were removed under the superintendence of the Diddler, and locked up until the arrival of the police.

It being now daylight, Mr. Tubbs ordered the fires to be lighted at once, and invited his preservers to breakfast.

The invitation was cordially accepted on their part, and whilst Mr. T. was dressing himself they refreshed themselves with a wash and a brush-up in one of the best bedrooms, to which they were escorted.

CHAPTER XL.

A CHEERFUL MEAL—SWAGS TURNS UP—ARRIVAL OF DOCTOR WADDLE ON HIS BAY—EXPLANATION AND DEPARTURE—THE HUNTER'S HORN—THE BAY BOLTS WITH THE DOCTOR—IN AT THE DEATH.

IT would have done a philanthropist's heart good to see the schoolboys seated at the hospitable breakfast-table of Mr. Tomkin Tubbs.

Now that all their vicissitudes were happily over, they were in excellent spirits, and one and all seemed bent upon carrying out the Diddler's maxim—viz., making up for the loss of their suppers overnight by devouring as much breakfast as possible.

Broiled ham, cold tongue and chicken, potted meat and eggs, buttered toast and coffee, disappeared with a celerity that was little less than marvelous.

Talking there was none.

The guests were too much occupied with eating to talk.

Mr. and Mrs. Tubbs, in mingled astonishment and delight, sat watching them with beaming countenances.

At length Mr. T. could no longer restrain himself, and exclaimed, as he helped the Diddler to his fourth slice of tongue:

"This is indeed a pleasant meeting. I really feel quite honored."

"Yes, indeed," joined in Mrs. T., as she replenished the coffee-cups; "and I am so rejoiced to see that the excitement of the past night has not destroyed our dear young friends' appetites."

"Oh, no, my dear madam," laughed the Diddler, gallantly; "quite reverse—assure you—increase rather—another egg—thank you."

"I'm sure I don't know what would have become of us," went on Mrs. Tubbs, "but for your timely assistance."

"We ought to be very thankful you were so near at hand," said Mr. Tubbs; "it was quite providential."

"Decidedly," assented the Diddler; "out of evil comes good—slice of toast!—yes, decidedly."

The conversation now became general, and Mr. Tubbs asked his young visitors a great many questions, which they as readily answered.

Breakfast was nearly over, when a tapping was heard at the door, and a doleful voice was heard saying, in a wailing tone:

"May I come in? I'm starving."

"Good gracious!" exclaimed Mrs. Tubbs; "who is it?"

"Swags!" responded the guests, simultaneously.

"Swags?" echoed Mr. and Mrs. Tubbs; "who is he?"

"Young friend of ours," explained the Diddler; "stout youth—asleep in the stable—forgotten—no matter."

"Oh pray let him come in, poor fellow," said Mrs. Tubbs.

"Come in, Swaggy!" called the Diddler.

The door opened, and the fat boy slowly intruded himself.

He presented a very laughter-moving appearance. His hair was over his eyes, and he was so completely covered with small particles of hay that he looked like a walking haystack.

"I want my breakfast," he said, piteously, as he turned his eyes toward the table.

"Come and sit down; here is plenty," said Mrs. Tubbs, kindly.

Swags advanced at about the pace of a young elephant.

"Sit by me, Swaggy!" cried the Diddler.

The stout youth approached, and the Diddler, quietly removing his chair as he was on the point of sitting down, he descended very abruptly on to the carpet.

"Oh, I'm shook to bits, and on an empty stomach, too!" he groaned.

"Never mind—pick him up—more careful next time," said the Diddler.

Swags being placed in his chair, his spirits seemed to revive, and some ham-and-eggs and a cup of coffee being placed before him, he commenced feeding with an intensity of purpose which was his principal characteristic at meal-times.

Mrs. Tubbs attended to him, and the good lady had all her work to do to keep him supplied.

For half an hour the fat boy continued to eat and drink everything that was placed before him, and without giving the smallest indication that his appetite was in the least appeased.

Mrs. T. looked at him in considerable perplexity—especially as his face was getting of a purple hue—and fearing that he might be ill, she whispered to the Diddler:

"Don't you think your young—a—friend has had almost as much as is good for him?"

"Too much, madam," the Diddler replied; "considerably—voracious appetite—glutton—put a stop to him."

The Diddler having thus expressed himself, bent down to Swags and commenced in a drowsy, monotonous tone:

"How—doth—the—little—busy—bee—"

"Don't interrupt me, please," murmured Swags, with his mouth full.

The Diddler took no notice, but continued:

"Improve—each—shining—hour, and—gather honey——"

"Oh, never mind that now," entreated Swags; "I don't care about poetry when I'm at my meals; it worrits me."

"All—the—day——" went on the Diddler.

Swags swayed.

"From—every—opening—flower."

The fat boy's head fell forward and rested in his plate. Doctor Watts's verse was too much for him. He was sound asleep.

"Stopped now—only way," said the Diddler, with a laugh, as he pointed to him.

"Wonderful! extraordinary!" exclaimed Mr. and Mrs. Tubbs; "and is he always like this?"

"Always eating or sleeping—when not doing one he does the other—both at once sometimes."

"Marvelous!" ejaculated Mr. Tubbs; "no wonder he's such a size."

The somnolent youth was carried to a couch and placed upon it, and this had scarcely been accomplished when the sound of horses' hoofs upon the gravel without was heard.

On looking from the window they beheld, to their great surprise, Doctor Waddle on the back of a handsome bay, attended by his groom, who was leading another horse.

"That's my chestnut," remarked Fitzsham, as he caught sight of it.

"But what is the doctor doing on horseback?" asked Pickwick; "he can't ride, can he?"

"Ha, ha! ride!" laughed the Diddler, somewhat derisively; "get inside—the best place for him."

The doctor certainly did not appear particularly at his ease.

He had received Mr. Tubbs's note, and had started off at once to inquire into the proceedings of his pupils.

The Hon. Fitzsham being a wealthy and therefore a favored pupil, he had ordered his chestnut to be brought with him, that he might have a companion in his ride back.

The doctor, having dismounted with all due precaution, was ushered into the breakfast-parlor, where Mr. and Mrs. Tubbs received him with much courtesy.

"Sorry to have put you to the trouble of a journey, doctor," said Tubbs, after the greetings were over.

"The sorrow is on my part," the doctor replied, "that I should hear such a sad report of my pupils' conduct."

"Oh, don't mention it, pray!" exclaimed Mr. Tubbs, apologetically; "I was in error; I recant my opinion."

"Then the letter I received from you?" said the doctor, in a somewhat bewildered tone.

"Was written in haste, under the impulse of the moment," Mr. Tubbs explained. "I sincerely regret it, for circumstances have since transpired which have entirely altered my opinion. Your pupils are a set of first-rate fellows, gallant heroes, that would do honor to any school, and be a credit to any master."

"Hear, hear, hear!" ejaculated the lively Diddler; "apology accepted—Tubbs brick—jolly good fellow—give cheer."

"Hurrah!" shouted the rest.

"Another—Doctor Waddle!"

"Hurr—ah!" they repeated.

"Little one for selves."

"Hurr-a-a-a-ah!" was the enthusiastic little one, which was by far the biggest of the three.

The doctor felt very much relieved at the explanation he had received, and after casting a smiling look at the boys, he sat down to breakfast, of which he was invited to partake, with a very excellent appetite induced by his ride.

During the meal Mr. Tubbs gave him a detailed account of all that had happened, concluding with the defeat and capture of the intruders.

These last seemed to cause him some perplexity.

"Never had my house broken into before," he said; "Robert, have you noticed any suspicious characters lurking about the premises within the last few days?"

This question was put to a footman, who looked the very picture of innocence.

"No, sir; 'avn't noticed nothink, sir!" he replied, glibly.

The Diddler pricked up his ears and looked at the speaker with his swivel eye as he muttered to himself:

"Robert—Bob—Bob the footman—that was it."

"The singular thing is," continued Mr. Tubbs, "that these fellows seemed to know their way about the house so well."

The Diddler arose, and giving a preliminary ahem! to enforce attention, walked deliberately up to the footman.

Then taking a piece of paper which he had captured, he unfolded it, and held it before his eyes.

"Know anything of this, Robert?" he asked, as he cocked his eye at him; "good plan of house—stairs—master's-room, first door on the right—eh, Robert?"

The eyes of the conscience-stricken domestic rolled in his head, his knees began to knock together, and suddenly he dropped down, clasping his hands.

"Oh, sir, forgive me!" he whined; "I did certainly draw out a little plan, but I didn't mean any harm—I didn't, indeed. I'm quite innocent, I am."

The door opened at this instant, and two policemen who had come to see Mr. Tubbs appeared.

"Hi, you're wanted!" called the Diddler.

The guilt of the footman being manifest, he was removed in custody, and the Diddler received the thanks of Mr. Tubbs for his shrewdness in detecting his dishonesty.

Matters being thus adjusted, Doctor Waddle proposed returning.

In a few moments the horses were brought to the door, and the whole troupe were presently mounted.

Swags was abruptly roused out of a lovely dream, and hurried out, and before he knew where he was, hoisted once more on the back of the dray horse.

"Where are we going?" he asked, in a bewildered manner.

"Home," answered the Diddler; "go to sleep—wake when you get there."

Doctor Waddle, mounted on his bay, looked anything but happy in his mind, especially as the spirited animal began to paw the ground impatiently, as if longing to be off.

"That's a magnificent piece of horseflesh you have there, doctor," remarked Mr. Tubbs, admiringly.

"Ye-es—he is—a—very," replied the preceptor, tremulously; "cost me a—hundred pounds."

"Cheap—cheap at the price!" cried Mr. Tubbs.

The expression of the doctor's face at this moment seemed to imply that he would have been glad to have got rid of him for half that sum, or less.

All being ready, there was nothing to do but to take leave and start.

"Good-by, young gentlemen!" said Mr. Tubbs. "I feel much indebted to you, and whenever you have an afternoon to spend, I shall always be happy to see you."

"All right," returned the Diddler; "won't forget—look you up soon—never desert old friends—adieu!"

"Good-by, doctor," cried Mr. and Mrs. Tubbs.

"Goo-ood-by, gasped that worthy personage, who was making desperate efforts to appear cool and unconcerned during the playful prancings of his steed.

The boys waved their hands finally to Mrs. Tubbs, who stood looking at them from the window, and waved hers in return, as the cavalcade moved on.

The doctor sat as stiff as a ramrod, with his legs out, looking the picture of discomfort.

It was pride alone that kept him from at once getting off.

"I say," said young Pickwick to the Diddler; "I don't think the doctor's quite as easy in his mind as he might be on the back of that steed of his."

"Not used to him yet," the latter replied; "will be by-and-by."

The Hon. Fitzsham, who was an excellent rider, came cantering up.

"Well-bred little chestnut, this of mine," he said, as he joined them; "lovely temper—gentle as a lamb; do anything with him."

"It's more than Doctor Waddle could say of his," remarked Tinkle; "just look at him."

They looked on ahead, to where the bay was rearing up on its hind legs and performing a circular waltz in the middle of the road, to the great dismay of its rider and the intense amusement of the lookers-on.

"He'll be off in a minute if he doesn't hold on tight," said young Pickwick.

"He oughtn't to have ventured on a spirited animal like that," said Dick Sancliff; "Swags's dray-horse would have been about the thing for him."

"Perhaps Swags would like to change with the doctor," suggested Pickwick.

'Ah!—perhaps would,' returned the Diddler; 'ask him; come on, Swaggy!"

"No, thank'ee," Swaggy replied, in a drowsy tone, being more than half asleep.

The doctor's steed continuing its evolutions, Fitzsham said to the Diddler:

"Something annoys that horse—stone in his shoe, perhaps. Let's come and see."

They trotted off, and presently reached the preceptor.

"What ever can be the matter with this obstreperous animal?" he almost groaned, as they came up to him; "he does nothing but assume a perpendicular position. It's really very distressing."

The doctor's appearance fully bore out his remark.

He was in an intense perspiration, his coat had worked up to the back of his neck, and his hat was over his eyes.

"I can't help myself," he said, apologetically; "if I had had the slightest idea the horse had been so vicious—whoa, who!—poor fellow!" gurgled the doctor, as the animal suddenly dropped on all fours and then commenced kicking up behind.

"Going to stand on his head now—for change," remarked the Diddler.

The Hon. Fitzsham had dismounted, and being used to horses, he, by dint of coaxing, at length induced the bay to stand still while he examined his hoofs.

"All right," he said, as he concluded his investigations; "nothing wrong there."

"It seems to me that everything's wrong," gasped the perspiring doctor; "and—ah!—there he goes again!"

This time the horse began to neigh loudly, and throwing back its ears and stiffening its fore-legs, seemed preparing for a bolt.

"Oh, dear! dear! what is to be done with this excitable animal?" cried Doctor Waddle, in despair; "he's like one possessed."

"Aren't you handling his mouth a little too rough, sir?" asked Fitzsham.

"I'm not touching his mouth," returned the doctor, who was tugging at the reins with all his might; "Diddler—my dear Diddler!—you know something about horses, don't you?"

"Know everything," returned the Diddler, with unblushing assurance; "sagacious animals—very touchy tempers, though, sometimes—lead, not drive, you know."

"Ye-es, exactly," said Doctor Waddle; "I'm afraid this is a touchy one. I wish you'd lay hold of his head—gently—very gently—and try to lead him."

"Certainly," responded the Diddler, as he grasped the bridle rein. "So ho, bay—there!" he exclaimed, cheerfully, as he patted his glossy neck.

The bay resented this liberty by tossing its head so violently that the doctor's nose narrowly escaped a severe blow.

"Do-on't excite him—p-p-ray, don't!" entreated the preceptor, in a fever of anxiety.

"Oh, no—soothe him—quiet measures—and so on," returned the knowing one, giving the horse a rub on his sleek haunches.

Again the bay made a restless plunge.

Its ears went forward as in act of listening, and he neighed and pawed the ground wistfully.

"There! there! what does he mean by that?" asked Doctor Waddle.

"I think he hears something," answered Fitzsham.

"I don't hear anything," said the doctor.

"Nor I—as yet," returned the young gentleman; "but a horse's ears are quicker than ours. Depend upon it, there's something in the wind."

"Why, what should there be?"

"Well, my opinion is that the horse you are on has been used to hunting."

"Good gracious me!" cried the doctor, with a fresh burst of apprehension. "If he were to catch sight of a red coat there'll be no holding him at all."

"That's a certainty," said Fitzsham.

"I really think, then, under the circumstances, it would be advisable for me to—a—dismount," suggested Doctor Waddle, nervously.

"I'm inclined to think so, too," Fitzsham replied.

"Hold his head, Diddler," said the doctor, "while I descend from——"

But before the operation could be accomplished, the huntsman's horn was heard.

The next moment a pack of hounds in full cry, with a hunting party at their heels, dashed across a field not a hundred yards off.

All further effort to hold the steed—which was a thoroughbred hunter—was utterly vain.

With an impetuous bound it sprang forward, took a flying leap over the hedge, and darted across the field at full speed after the hounds, with Doctor Waddle on his back, and the Honorable Jonadab, whose chestnut also was a hunter, close behind.

"Stop him! he's bearing me to destruction! Stop the brute!" shrieked the terrified schoolmaster. "I shall be killed; I'm sure I shall!"

"Not you, doctor," cried Fitzsham, encouragingly. "Dig your knees in tight. Give him his head, and he'll carry you through everything."

The classical gentleman scarcely heard these comforting remarks.

In his terror he threw himself forward upon his horse's neck, which he grasped convulsively, and gave himself up for lost.

Everything seemed to fly past him with the velocity of a whirlwind, and he felt quite certain that when the frantic steed came to a stop, if ever he did, he should find himself at the antipodes.

The party in the road stood looking after the flying preceptor until he disappeared.

"Well," remarked the Diddler at length, "we've had a night of it, and the doctor seems to be making a day of it.

"Yes," returned Pickwick; "I don't see why we shouldn't follow his example."

"We're all ready," exclaimed the rest.

"That's the ticket," cried the Diddler, enthusiastically. "Follow the hounds by all means—hark forward!—hark forward, tantivy!—and so on."

There was a general stir amongst the young riders. But leaping the gate was a feat to which none, not even the coal-black Arabian, was equal to.

"Never mind; go through gate instead of jumping over it," said the Diddler, cheerfully, as he swung it open.

They all passed into the field.

"Now, then, boys, pull 'selves together," the Diddler exclaimed. "Swaggy, put steam on, old fellow."

"Forward, yoicks!" cried young Pickwick.

"Yoicks, forward!" shouted the Diddler.

And away they went, one horse stimulating another till they worked up to a very tolerable rate of speed.

In the meantime the luckless Doctor Waddle was dashing along at a break-neck pace.

As it was, he resigned himself to his inevitable fate, clinging to the neck of his steed as firmly as ever the Old Man of the Mountain stuck to the back of Sinbad the Sailor.

Onward flew the bay over hedges and ditches, sometimes floundering in the latter, scraping the doctor's legs against posts and trunks, splashing through ponds, dashing across streams, stumbling and rising again, the thoroughbred animal never for an instant relaxing its efforts.

At length the red coats of the huntsmen came in view.

The sight seemed to inspire the bay, for it bounded forward with increased rapidity, and to the surprise of the riders, passed them like a flash of lightning or a meteor.

"Oh, oh—st—o—op, him!" gasped the doctor, faintly, as he flew by.

But no one heard him, and he was still whirled along until he reached the place where the dogs had just caught the fox.

Here the animal, dashing up at full speed, slipped, fell on its knees, and shot Doctor Waddle over his head into the midst of the hounds, which, being somewhat doubtful as to what kind of animal it was that had fallen amongst them, commenced an attack upon his coat-tails and gaiters.

"I shall be devoured—eaten alive! Murder!" roared the doctor.

At this juncture the rest of the hunters came up.

"What, Doctor Waddle!" they exclaimed, in unfeigned astonishment, after calling off the dogs and recognizing him—"is it really you?"

"Oh, yes, it's me," was the doleful reply.

"Why, you ride like the wild huntsman. We hadn't the least idea you were so daring a rider."

"I'm sure I hadn't," almost groaned the doctor; "it's my first attempt, and I hope the last."

"Wonderful—extraordinary!" cried every one; "and in at the death, too."

"It will be the death of me!" wailed the sufferer.

"Oh, no, no; nothing of the sort!" declared the huntsman. "No one dead but the fox, and his brush is yours!"

In an instant the tail of the animal was cut off and handed to the doctor, who had been lifted up and set on his feet.

He certainly presented a very piteous and unsportsman-like appearance.

His clothes were torn and smeared with mud; his hair, ears, and nostrils were clogged with dust; his face scratched and disfigured with mire; but he cheered up a little at the admiration his prowess had excited.

His pupils, also riding up at this juncture, gave their damaged preceptor a hearty cheer, whilst the Diddler still further soothed him by extolling his skill as an equestrian.

"Never saw finer riding, never!" he declared; "slap on you dashed—splendid—very!"

The doctor received his praises with becoming modesty, and then feeling himself very damp and uncomfortable, proposed returning home.

But the master of the hunt would not hear of his departure.

"We have our annual dinner coming off at the town-hall," they informed him, "and you must join us."

"But my wet clothes," pleaded Doctor Waddle, piteously; "I shall catch my death of cold."

"Oh, no! you shall be provided with dry ones," said his friends.

On these conditions the doctor yielded, and was carried off in triumph to the town.

"Another feed!" exclaimed the Diddler, in his liveliest tone; "capital—very thing—ride given appetite—let's follow, boys. Hurrah!"

"They won't give us any, will they?" said Tuppy, doubtfully.

"Tuppy, dear boy, certainly," the Diddler replied.

"But we're not invited," suggested young Pickwick.

"No matter—friends of doctor. Doctor great sportsman—nothing to pay—jolly. Come on—come on, Swaggy!"

"Eh!" yawned the fat youth, waking up; "another feed? I'm ready!"

"Come along, fatty."

"Any fish?" asked Swags, becoming suddenly quite lively.

"Cartloads!" cried the Diddler; "stewed eels—soup—tarts—beeswax, and so on."

"I'll come!" exclaimed Swags, smacking his lips, and off they went.

* * * * * *

The banquet was a very elegant affair; silver plate and bouquets of choice flowers were there in profusion, and a large number of ladies were present to witness the sight.

Doctor Waddle, whose face, from the number of small pieces of court-plaster that were stuck on it, resembled a currant-pudding, completely recovered himself under the good cheer, and when his health was proposed by the chairman he responded in a speech which elicited great applause.

He was not a little startled as the applause died away at hearing a well-known voice exclaim:

"Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen——"

Glancing round he beheld, to his dismay, the whole of the nine pupils seated at a side-table, with the Diddler at their head.

The latter was on his legs, and at once commenced:

"Just venture make few remarks—very brief—Doctor Waddle's extraordinary man—knowledge—classics—profound—attachment to field-sports—great hunter, and so on—riding fearless—never brilliant—in short—jolly good fellow—so say all of us—hurrah!"

The hurrah was taken up with much laughter and cheers, and the proceedings terminated with great *eclat*.

The doctor was in exuberant spirits, and insisted on riding home with his boys.

So they went out into a field, where the doctor mounted again, loudly cheered by his pupils as he clung to the horse's neck. However, he reached home in safety.

(To be continued.)

Rob Rollalong, the Runaway.

By BRACEBRIDGE HEMYNG,

AUTHOR OF THE "JACK HARKAWAY" AND "DICK LIGHTHEART" STORIES, ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER IX.

SOFT TOMMY.

MR. VANGS put on a look like that of a man who has been reading a penitential psalm, or listening to a "funeral" sermon, because he expected to meet some one shortly, and he would seem peculiar if he did not make some show of horror at his friend's untimely fate.

He had not gone far along the seashore before a strange-looking being sprang out from behind a sand-hill, where he had been lurking.

His clothes were ragged and tattered, his feet bare, his head surmounted by a straw hat with a broad brim, and his face wore a half-cunning, half-vacant expression, while his age could not have been more than sixteen.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the boy, with the grin of a demon.

Vangs recoiled in affright, for, though he knew not why, he felt alarmed at this apparition.

Could the boy have seen anything?

That was the question which agitated the man's mind; and when we are conscious of guilt it takes but very little to excite one's alarm.

"What the deuce are you doing here?" cried Vangs.

"Ha, ha, ha!" replied the boy, in his loud, vacant manner, making the woods echo with his weird, elfin laughter.

Vangs took up a stone and threatened the lad with it.

"That's what killed him," said the boy. "Ha, ha! Didn't he sink nicely? I saw him go under. Then you ran through his clothes."

"Maniac! What are you talking about?"

The drops of perspiration stood trembling on the first officer's forehead, for he had believed his dastardly act unseen by all save the eye of heaven.

"I saw it all, I tell you," continued the boy. "David used to throw stones at Goliah. I heard that at school. Are you David, and was he the Philistine giant? Was it because he was a giant you killed him?"

Vangs stared curiously at the lad.

"He can't be in his right mind," he thought. "Surely he is some half-witted urchin who runs wild about the woods. I will test him."

Dropping the stone he had intended to throw at the boy, he said, in a kinder tone than he had hitherto employed:

"What's your name?"

"None of your business," answered the boy.

"See here, sonny; I've a dollar-note for you. Take it."

The boy beheld the bill which Vangs offered him, but with an evidence of cunning which would scarcely be expected in one of his years, he refused to touch it.

"Won't you have it?" said Vangs. "A whole dollar isn't picked up in the street every day."

"That's true enough. Put it down on that flat rock and I'll come and take it up; but I won't come too near you."

"Why not?"

"You're dangerous. Didn't I see you plump that friend of yours kerchunk down among the mermaids, and won't he come up against you on the day of judgment, with seaweed in his hair and the death-mark on his forehead?"

Again Vangs trembled, for the boy's memory was tenacious, and he did not show any signs of forgetting what he had seen.

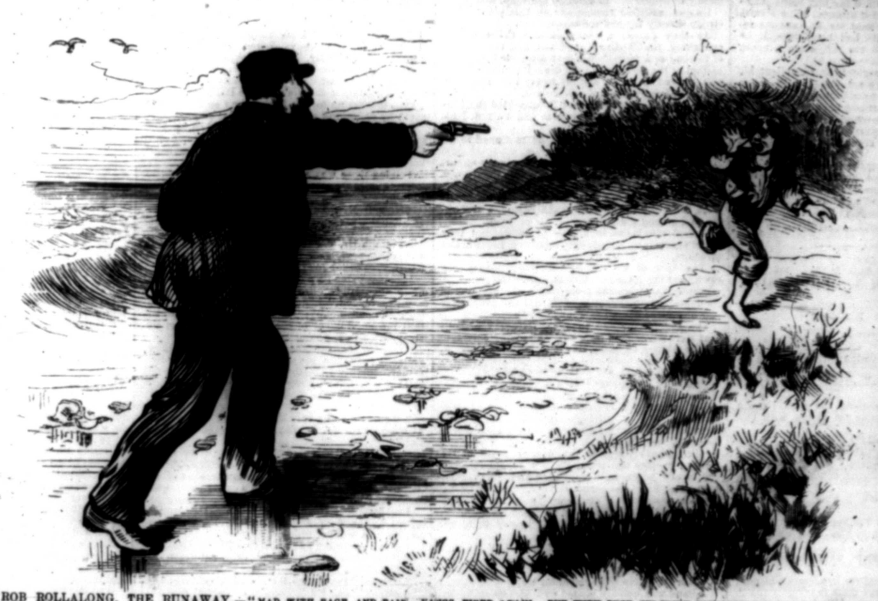
Determined to have some further conversation with him, Vangs so far humored him as to place the bill on the top of the flat stone which he had indicated.

Then he returned to his former position, and the boy, making a rapid run, took up the bill, glanced at it, as if to see if it was genuine, and retreated to the shelter of his sand-hill.

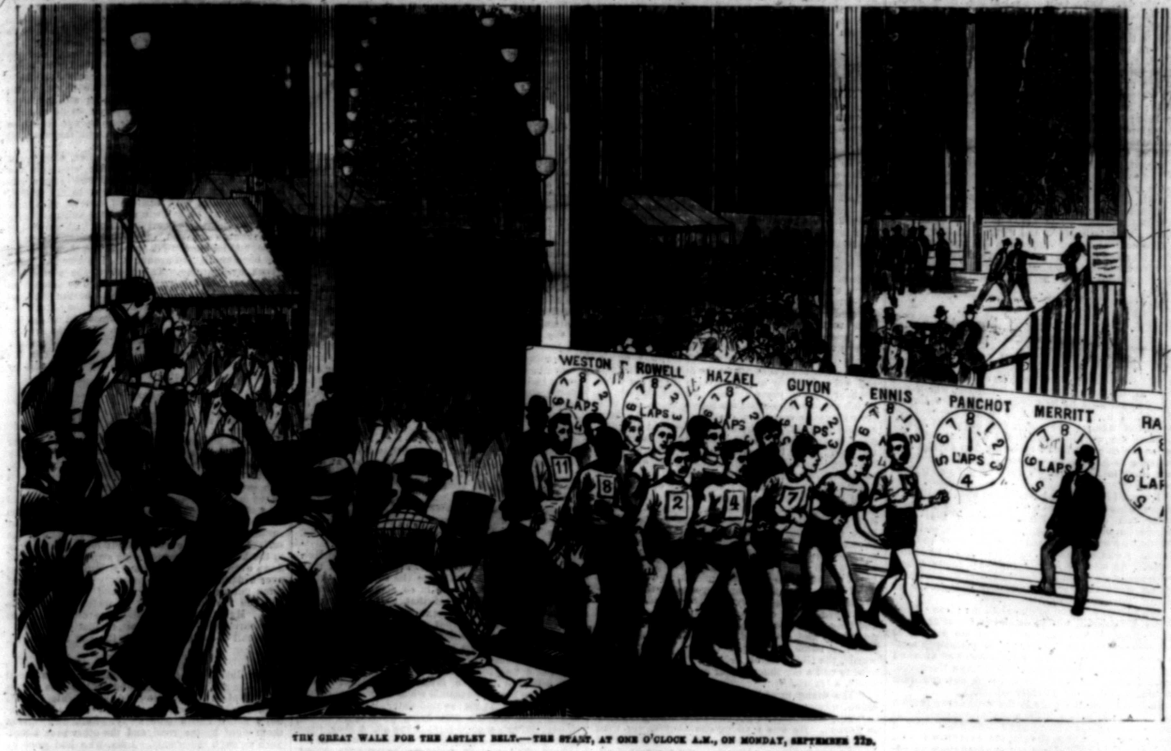
"Now," said Vangs, "what's your name?"

"They call me Soft Tommy," was the reply. "But, then, those Staten Islanders are all fools, and half of them don't know big A from a bull's foot."

"Rather a smart answer for a crazy one," thought Vangs. "I'll try him again. Tommy, you must be mistaken when you say you saw me—a——"



ROB ROLLALONG, THE RUNAWAY.—"MAD WITH RAGE AND PAIN, VANGS FIRED AGAIN. BUT WITH SUCH CELERITY DID SOFT TOMMY RUN, THAT HE SOON GOT OUT OF RANGE. 'HA, HA, HA!' HE CRIED, 'YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE THAT CAN THROW ROCKS.'"



THE GREAT WALK FOR THE ASTLEY BELT.—THE START, AT ONE O'CLOCK A.M., ON MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 22D.

He hesitated, not knowing exactly how to put the case.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Tommy, louder than ever. "If you aren't the worst I ever saw. You killed the bloat, and now you haven't the heart to speak about it. I've got blood on my hands—I have. I killed a boy once, but they never suspected Soft Tommy—oh, no! I did it better nor you, for nobody saw me."

Nobody saw me!

These words rang like the sentence of doom in the ears of Vangs.

He began to grow angry, and thought that he was wasting his time in talking to the boy.

"It's pretty clear that nobody would believe you on your oath," he said. "So, if you don't skip lively, I'll drop you one with my pistol, which will stop your fancy shinanigans for a season or two."

Soft Tommy took up a piece of rock and dived behind the sand-hill.

The next moment he reappeared some distance off, chuckling to himself like a wild thing.

With an unerring aim, he threw the lump at Vangs, and struck him on the shoulder with such force that the pistol was discharged without doing any harm.

Mad with rage and pain, Vangs fired again and again.

But with such celerity did Soft Tommy run that he soon got out of range.

"Ha, ha, ha!" he cried, as he neared the woods which lined the shore. "You're not the only one that can throw rocks. You've got the brand of Cain on your brow, because you're a murderer. They'll hang you, some day, higher than Haman. Ha, ha, ha!"

Vangs gnashed his teeth with rage.

The boy disappeared in the woods, and the first officer continued his way to the nearest cottage.

By the promise of a five-dollar bill he got a fisherman to accompany him to the beach in a boat, and take a grappling-iron to drag for the body of his friend who was drowned while bathing.

When they reached the spot where Captain Spike went down they saw the body lying like waxwork at the sandy bottom of the sea.

It was not a difficult task to raise it.

In ten minutes the corpse was fished up and placed at the bottom of the boat.

"Got an ugly knock on the forehead!" exclaimed the fisherman. "Wonder how he had that?"

"He was struggling violently," replied Vangs, "and must have struck against the corner of some rock as he went down."

"It's all sand hereabouts," said the fisherman.

"Perhaps a fish bit him."

"It ain't no fish-bite."

"Well, well, how can I tell what it is?" said Vangs, in an irritable tone. "I was so taken aback when I saw him go down that I had no time to observe anything. Oh! why was I not taught to swim in my youth? If I had only known the art I could have saved the life of a man who was dearer to me than a brother."

"It's real mean for a man to drown this way," said the fisherman.

"It is, indeed! Won't you row in so we can get his clothes?" exclaimed Vangs.

"Why, certainly!"

The boat was propelled toward the shore, and Vangs stepped on land, only to find that the clothes had disappeared.

"H—— and d——!" he cried, in his forcible language. "Who's been and taken his clothes? This place is about the biggest fraud out."

"Ha, ha, ha!" resounded from the edge of the woods.

"That's Soft Tommy's cry," I guess, said the fisherman.

"Who's he?" asked Vangs, pretending ignorance.

"He's a half-witted cuss, who lives in the woods mostly. Sometimes he's at the Widow Elliott's. She's very good to him, and there's always a bed and a bit of grub for him. But Tommy's a cuss, as I said before, and he's got caves in the woods, where he'd rather live than sleep in a decent bed."

"What made his head go wrong?"

"Guess he was born that way."

"Has he no friends and relations?" asked Vangs.

"None, as I know of," answered the fisherman. "His mother died in giving birth to him, and his father was one of old Elliott's crew on board the bark that foundered with all hands."

"Ah!" ejaculated Vangs.

"That's why the Widow Elliott takes so kindly to him," continued the fisherman; "and we all make allowances for Soft Tommy. We all knew his father and mother, and it's hard, I tell you, boss, to be afflicted that way."

"It is, indeed!" replied Vangs. "Are the Elliotts decent people?"

"I'll bet you! There ain't a more reputable widow woman on the island; no, nor in New York State, either."

"That's good! Fine girl, her daughter?"

"She is so; and the man who gets her will have a real woman for his wife. I tell you, boss, that girl will be a big bonanza to any one who is lucky enough to get her," replied the fisherman.

"Where shall we take the body of my poor friend?" asked Vangs, changing the subject.

"He can lie in my house, if you choose."

"What is your name?"

"My name's Drost."

"Dutch?" queried Vangs.

"Dutch descent," replied the fisherman. "I guess that boy, Tommy, has made off with the clothes, if they were left on the beach. It looks like one of his tricks. Anyway, I'll throw a sail over it, and we can put it in a spare room in the cottage."

"Thank you. That will do very well," replied Vangs.

"You'll have to notify the police, and they'll notify the coroner. Are you staying down here, or only from New York for the day?"

"I've never been in Huguenot before, but I intend to stay at the hotel at the depot."

"Cannon's. Very reputable place, too. Couldn't do better. I've got a room to let, but I couldn't recommend it," said Drost.

"Why not, my friend?" asked Vangs.

Drost pulled along silently for a few yards, and then spitting out his quid, as if to give emphasis to what he was about to say, replied:

"The trouble is, my wife has h—'s temper and her own, too. I should have been a millionaire if it hadn't been for her. Her tongue goes from morning to night, and sometimes all night long. But 'nuff said. It's a dirty bird that fouls its own nest. All the neighbors know about me. Ask them and you'll get my character, and hers, too," he added, with a chuckle.

He had been rowing the corpse to his cottage home all the time he had been speaking, and just as the boat's keel grated on the sand he added:

"Don't say a word about this five-dollars, d'ye see?"

"I tumble," replied Vangs, with a smile of commiseration, to think that a man in his sober senses should allow a fiend of a woman to embitter his life and render his home miserable.

The next moment the fisherman had stepped ashore, and with Vangs's help he carried the ghastly burden to a room back of the kitchen, and placed it on a bed.

"Poor fellow!" said Vangs. "I'll go to the police-station, and if you come up to the hotel this evening you'll find me there."

"I'll be there," replied Drost.

Vangs nodded his head and started off for the village, his mind not altogether at ease.

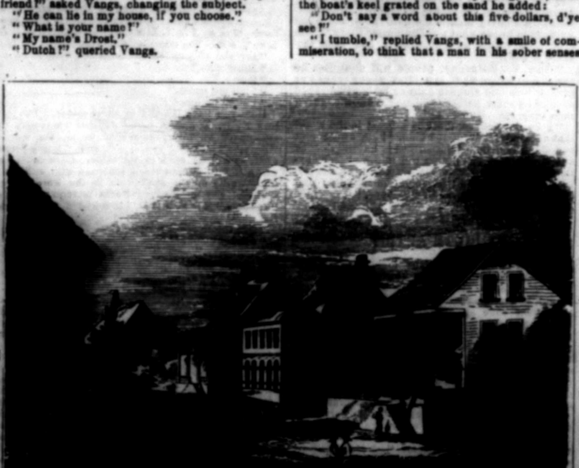
He feared there was trouble ahead, but he had sufficient confidence in himself to extricate himself.

During his life he had passed through many dangers, and had always come out safely.

But the pitcher goes often to the well without hurt, and yet it gets broken at last.

(To be continued.)

"Rob Rollalong was commenced in No. 672.



TALKS WITH BOYS ABOUT FOREIGN LANDS.—A STREET IN MONROVIA, THE CAPITAL OF LIBERIA. SEE NEXT PAGE.

THE GREAT WALKING MATCH AT NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER, 1879.

THE excitement caused by walking matches reached its height in that recently held in New York, the fifth contest for the Astley belt, which seems to be won and lost by each country.

HISTORY OF THE ASTLEY BELT.

In January, 1878, Sir John Drysdale Astley, Baronet and Member of Parliament from North Lincolnshire, an enthusiastic patron of manly sports, organized a new and attractive system of pedestrian contests, being a six-day race on foot without assistance, but with the privilege of going at any gait, and of walking and resting at any intervals that the contestants choose.

This is the style of race now universally known as a six-day "go-as-you-please" contest. The prizes offered consisted of the $500 gold-and-silver belt shown in our engraving, and about $4,000 in different purses guaranteed by the promoter of the race.

The champion belt is a heavy chain of eight links or plates, one of solid gold and the others of sterling silver, fastened to each other by hinges and silver bars, and fastened underneath to the real belt, which is of red leather. The total weight of the trophy is about five pounds. The central link is the golden one; it is irregularly elliptical in shape, and is surrounded by a handsome border cut in scroll patterns. In the centre of this link or plate is an inscription in raised block letters, faced with blue enamel, reading, "Long Distance Champion of the World." The seven silver links are uniform in size and shape, being oblong and about three inches by four and one-half in size. On the two next in place to the golden link are figures in bas-relief, the figure on one being that of a runner and on the other that of a walker. These figures are carefully finished, and the backgrounds of the links are engraved with sketchy landscapes. The link exactly opposite the golden one when the belt is worn is engraved with the inscription, "Presented by Sir J. D. Astley, Bart., M. P., March, 1878." The next link to the right, or the third to the left of the golden link, is inscribed, "Won by Daniel O'Leary, of Chicago, U. S. A., March 18th, 1878. Distance, 520¼ miles, in 138 hours 48 minutes. Beating H. Vaughan, of Chester, 500 miles; H. Brown, 'Blower,' of Fulham, 476 miles; and 15 others." The next link, the one next to that bearing the running figure, contains two inscriptions. The one on the upper half reads, "Won by Daniel O'Leary, of Chicago, Gilmore's Garden, New York, U. S. A., September 30th, to October 5th, 1878. Distance covered, 403 miles." The inscription on the lower half reads, "Won by Charles Rowell, of Chester, Cambridge, Eng., Gilmore's Garden, New York, U. S. A., March 10th to 15th, 1879. Distance covered, 500 miles." On the upper half of the second link to the right of the golden one is the inscription, "Won by Edward Payson Weston, of Providence, U. S. A., Agricultural Hall, Islington, June 16th to 21st, 1879. Distance covered, 550 miles."

The names of those who entered the race are E. P. Weston, born at Providence, R. I., March 15th, 1839; Charles Rowell, born at Chesterton, England, in 1854; John Ennis, born June 4th, 1842, in County Longford, Ireland; George Hazael, born in London, November 22d, 1845; George Guyon, born at St. Cécile, Canada, September 21st, 1853; Peter J. Panchot, born in Buffalo, N. Y., December 10th, 1842; Frederick Krohne, born in 1841; Norman Taylor, born in Vermont, in 1830; Frank H. Hart, born in Hayti, in 1857; Hiram Jackson, born in Oldham, England; Samuel Merritt, born at Havana, N. Y., March 4th, 1858; William H. Dutcher, born in Lee, Mass., April 14th, 1849; and Pierre Federmeyer.

The contest began September 22d, and no fewer than fourteen thousand persons assembled to witness the start. It closed on Saturday night, the successful competitor being Charles Rowell.

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Talks with Boys about Foreign Lands.

THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA.

OUR ships do not often touch on the coast of Africa at the little Republic of Liberia, which has been established by free negroes from the United States. I had often heard of it in my school-lessons, but when I got older, and began to knock around the world, never heard of it at all. So when the ship in which I made my first voyage was running along the Pepper Coast, in Africa, I was not sorry to hear that we were to put in at Monrovia.

I knew Liberia had been begun about 1816 as a place where emancipated slaves could be sent from this country. People thought that they would do wonders in Africa, where the soil was fertile, and where all suited their character and systems. I was anxious to see what they had really done. At last we neared the flat, sandy coast, with rocky steeps in the distance, and wooded hills rising some twenty miles inland, and groves of many varieties of palm.

We had only to land to dispel all my ideas. Monrovia, the capital, was so named in honor of President Monroe, who greatly favored the project of sending negroes to Africa. It is pleasantly situated on the rising ground of the coast, well adorned with trees within the promontory of Cape Mesurado, behind which we ran so as to lie to, covered from the full swing of the Atlantic rollers.

It is like a small village in the most negro section of the South, with a little more pretension, for it boasts a President's house and a ramshackle wooden Senate House. The streets are overgrown with grass, and the little stores and taverns show no enterprise and energy, but numbers of idlers and a total want of thrift. The farms around extend but a short distance, and are poorly cultivated.

The Methodist, Episcopal and Baptist Missions are doing much good, and endeavoring to encourage industry. There are examples of steady, prosperous families, especially in the farming region on the St. Paul. The chief product is sugar, of which about 300,000 pounds are raised annually. An active trade is carried on with the natives in the interior, and there are thirty vessels plying along the coast.

The native tribes, are, however, often very troublesome, and a Liberian army was utterly defeated by them at Harper, in 1875, losing three cannon and all their ammunition.

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THE HUNTER'S LIFE—A WOLF-HUNT IN MAINE.

OUR illustration of a "Wolf-Hunt in Maine" in the present number reproduces upon paper a scene, that is of frequent occurrence in that ice-bound State in Winter. When the numerous lakes and rivers become locked in the frosty embrace of Winter, the wolf will start out from the almost impregnable recesses of the forests in search of food.

A long and severe Winter has the effect of making very scarce the natural means of subsistence of these animals, and they are ofttimes forced, even should their natural cravings not prompt them, to prey upon the flocks of the resident farmers. Should the wolf's inclination lead him to feed upon the dainty morsels afforded by a well-kept sheep-fold, the havoc he makes is simply wonderful; and for the protection of said stock the residents band themselves together, and, under the guidance of a captain, of whom it is only required that he be a good shot and possess a thorough knowledge of the country, start out in search of this wily marauder.

The programme of a wolf-hunt under such circumstances is as follows: The trail of the wolf is followed until the captain of the band becomes well assured in his own mind that the animal can be surrounded. The hunters are then formed into a wide circle, each man being within short hailing distance of his neighbor; this circle is then gradually narrowed down, and the wolf is surprised to find himself completely hemmed in.

In forming the ring, it is of advantage to the hunters to have the point of some hill for its centre, as it prevents the occurrence of any accident in shooting across it.

This, however, depends entirely upon the position of the wolf, and it frequently happens that the game is bagged in the centre of a clearing. Not infrequently the shrewd animal shows considerable generalship, and by the rapidity of his movements and frequent feints at breaking through particular points in the circle disconcerts the hunters, and by this means succeeds in making good its escape.

Much daring and considerable prowess are requisite for the successful prosecution of this species of sport in the centres and along the outskirts of these frozen forests. The snow and ice, however, try the feet of the wolf very severely, and in the face of a stout resistance upon the part of the hunters the animal soon becomes an easy prey, when all the avenues of escape are kept closely guarded.

When a wolf is killed, the body is conveyed to the nearest store or tavern, and there exhibited as a trophy, while the season becomes one of jollification among the participators in the hunt. The white, skeleton tracery of the forest, the snow-capped pines and fir-trees, with their pendants of icicles, the vast expanse of snow, made dazzlingly white by contrast with the leaden clouds of a Winter's sky, the curling clouds of bluish smoke and the ceaseless flash of the busy rifles, form a scene that possesses a peculiar picturesqueness of its own, and when once seen is rarely, if ever, forgotten.

◆

HOW ORANG-OUTANGS ARE HUNTED.

KNOWING that W. T. Hornaday, the naturalist, could tell of many entertaining adventures through which he had passed while hunting them in Borneo, we sought an interview with him, and give an account of what we learned, which we know our readers will enjoy:

"To get down to business, Mr. Hornaday, I'd like to listen to your own account of orang-outang hunting in Borneo."

"All right; fire away with your questions, and I'll keep even with you," said the naturalist, as he gave another twist to the flax padding with which he was winding the wooden arm skeleton and iron rod to fill out one of the arms of the largest beast's hide.

"When and how did you get settled down to business as a hunter in Borneo?"

"It was in the Fall of 1878—I think in the month of September—that I shot this specimen upon which I am now working. He was in size and weight next to the largest one I secured—weight, a little more than one hundred and seventy pounds. The orangs inhabit the river country and the adjacent marshes, where there is quite a growth of scrubby forest. One day, as several of my native assistants and myself were paddling our boat lazily down the river, we heard one of those howls, or growls, or bellows, which could not be mistaken for anything else than the expressive voice of a good big mias. We kept a close lookout, and by-and-by I caught the first glimpse of those great, red, shaggy knees up in a tree-top. Then I saw the ugly old monster lazily reaching from bough to bough—and the sight of such an orang, reaching six or seven feet at a time, was a spectacle to behold! I waited my opportunity, fixed the stock of my gun snugly against my shoulder, and drew a bead on his majesty. The rifle ball lodged in his great, broad chest, and his huge, ugly form swayed a little in the struggle between life and death. Then down it came with a rattling, cracking crash, almost falling into our boat, which would certainly have swamped us. Oh, how I would like to shoot that old fellow over again, now! There was game for you, such as the American hunter would scarcely feel encouraged to dream of. I had six or eight of the natives to assist me, and they at once declared that this was the largest mias they had ever seen. Accordingly, they gave him the name of 'Rajah Pedang,' or, in other words, the Governor of Pedang. They are almost sure to call a big thing, either in the form of man or beast, a 'rajah.'"

"The orang must be a beast of very ugly disposition, when captured alive, is he not?"

"Yes, sometimes. I got one alive during my stay in Borneo. He was a young one—not larger than an eight or ten-year-old boy. When we discovered him he was in a tree, which stood out alone by itself. The darkies cut the tree down, and there he was. We had forked sticks ready for him, and we put one of these over his neck, thus pinning him down to the ground, I would rather have put my hand against a buzz-saw than to put it in his mouth.

"He was as mad as a tiger, and he took no pains to conceal his ferocity. On the contrary, he displayed it to the very best of advantage. After we had secured him safely we tantalized him just to see how far he would go in his anger. He actually became so enraged that he took one of his own fingers between his teeth and bit it through to the solid bone! Then, when we got him into the boat, he managed to get hold of the fingers of his dead mother lying beside him, and bit them quite as fiercely as he had his own. I tied a rope around his neck and took him home to headquarters. There I assigned him to a bath-room, where he could have everything his own way. But he was surly and wouldn't eat much of anything, though I had my level best to keep him supplied with the delicacies of the season, and especially with the boiled rice, which is deemed good for the orang-outang when in captivity.

"But he hung on the rafters with those long arms of his, and he would not eat, except when he tried to eat me. I couldn't induce him to become an admirer of mine, and he pined away, as orang-outangs always do in captivity. Their disposition seems to be such that they prefer death to bondage, and this is probably the reason that they are so seldom seen even in the best of menageries. One night we heard a heavy thud in the bath-room, and when we went in to see what was the matter there lay the little mias, whose own obstinancy had been the death of him."

"Now, Mr. Hornaday, people will doubtless be curious to know what you think about orangs or gorillas handling clubs in fighting man, as has been alleged by some persons claiming a knowledge on such subjects. How is it?"

"I do not believe there is a beast in the world that does anything of the kind. I am aware that one of our recognized authorities in natural science has stated that the gorilla will utilize almost anything he can lay hold on for a weapon. However, I have my doubts on that point, confirmed by considerable observation and experience."

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A PIUTE ARTIST.

AMONG the Piute Indians lounging about a Western city is a man thirty years of age, who is quite an artist. He is undoubtedly self-taught, and dashes along with astonishing facility and great rude strength. Recently a gentleman found him drawing a huge grizzly bear on the blank part of a show-bill posted on a bill-board. He had two or three squaws for his audience, and the bear he drew was a most ill-tempered and ferocious-looking beast. Having finished drawing the bear the Indian made two or three sweeps of his pencil and drew lines which at fist seemed to be two or three saplings bent down in the form of a snare, and when a line was dropped perpendicularly from the top of these and brought about the neck of the bear in what seemed to be a noose, the gentleman thought the Indian had completed his work by showing how the bear was caught. In a few more sweeps, however, what seemed bent saplings took their place as the outlines of a distant range of mountains; what had seemed a dangling rope grew to be a deep ravine, the noose about the neck of the bear disappeared, and in its place was seen, in the distance, a small lake, and, in short, there was soon seen quite a striking and picturesque landscape, the gentleman standing by and sharpening pencils for the Indian as he dashed away at his picture. Had this Indian been placed at a proper school while young, he would no doubt have made a fine artist. A boy among the the Piutes, some sixteen years of age, also shows a good deal of aptness in drawing. He runs to horses, locomotives and trains of cars. In his drawings of locomotives he puts in even the smallest and most insignificant parts, showing that he has closely studied them.

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SECOND SIGHT,

AS PRACTICED BY ROBERT HELLER, EXPLAINED.

ROBERT HELLER, or rather Robert Palmer, for the latter was the name under which he graduated at the King's College, London, got his idea of second-sight after witnessing a performance of the celebrated Houdin in England. The great French prestidigitateur never imparted the secret to any save his son, who was his coadjutor, but Palmer, or Heller, as we shall call him, after witnessing the exhibition, discarded the then prevalent notion of animal magnetism, and at once concluded that the identification of the article by the blindfolded boy depended upon an alphabetical arrangement by which the question was propounded.

After much study he succeeded in perfecting a system which, though different in detail from that of the Frenchman, was theoretically the same, and he forthwith sought an apt pupil to assist him in presenting the mystery to the public. This, be it remembered, was not easy, for the interrogated party had a much more difficult task in the solution of the alphabetically put question than he had in propounding it, so that upon an average not one in a hundred was successful in sufficiently perfecting himself to appear in public.

Heller's second sight was, in fact, a much more complicated affair than that of Houdin's. It was considerably enlarged, and comprehended at least double the number of questions and answers, embracing in its range almost every conceivable article which could be presented by an audience. In the course of a long interview recently had with Mr. Fred Hunt, Jr., a reporter of the Cincinnati *Times*, obtained the above facts and the following full and interesting statement:

"I was twelve years of age when I became Heller's pupil, and intricate and perplexing as it may appear to those who examine the subjoined table, I succeeded in six weeks in so comprehending it that, at the expiration of that time, we gave at Smith & Nixon's Hall an exhibition, when I underwent a severe test without a blunder. It is not so long ago but many who read this will remember the occasion. In the meantime, during the years we were together, Heller was constantly enlarging and perfecting his system. He is now gone, and has solved a greater mystery than that which puzzled so many thousands while he was on earth, and I believe that his reputed sister, Haidee Heller, and myself are the only living persons in whom Robert Heller's second-sight is vested. A short time since a writer in a New York journal attempted an expose of the mystery, which was extensively copied by the press throughout the country, and reproduced in some of the English papers, but it was so tangled and inexplicable as to so confound the question that it would be impossible for the party interrogated to come to anything near a correct answer. Heller had so simplified the system as to embrace every variety of article classified in sets, as will be shown in the accompanying table—one question, with a word or two added, sufficing to elicit a correct answer for ten different articles.

"The student must be first posted in a new alphabetical arrangement, with which he must familiarize himself as thoroughly as a boy in learning his primer. This is the most difficult part of the business, but when mastered thoroughly it becomes as easy as if the question were plainly propounded."

FOR EXAMPLE,

you want the initials or name in a ring. Say it is Anna. By the alphabetical arrangement (see the appendix below) H stands for A, D for N. The exclamation "Hurry up" always means a repetition of the last letter, and again H will give the answer when put as follows:

"Here is a name."
"Do you see it?"
"Hurry up."
"Have you got it."

Attention is only paid to the first letter of every sentence, and it will be perceived that the name of Anna is spelled.

Again, take Gazette, which is abbreviated in a phonographic manner in order to simplify the question. G is A, A is H, Z is hurry (not hurry up), E is F, T is P. The question would be:

"Are you able to tell the name?"
"Here it is."
"Hurry."
"Find the name."
"Please be quick."

Here you have GAZET in short meter. The letters K, U, X and Z being difficult wherewith to commence an interrogative sentence, the words "pray," "look," "see this," and "hurry" are used, as will be seen in the table. Care must be taken not to commence a sentence with either of these words unless applicable to the word to be spelled. For instance, if Xenia is required, X is "see this," E is F, N is D, I is B and A is H. Thus the question:

"See this?"
"Find it quick."
"Do hurry."
"Be quick."
"How is it spelt?"

Again, for the initials U. S., you will say:

"Look."
"Now, then."
"U is look and S is N."

(To be continued.)

◆

A PROVIDENTIAL ESCAPE.

IT was in the Summer of 1855 that a party of some thirty children, ranging in age from five to ten years, were returning for dinner from the "District School," some few miles west of Cincinnati, when one of those sudden thunder-storms, so frequent during the hot season, burst on them. The schoolhouse was situated in the midst of a piece of waste land known as "The School Common," and before the children had cleared the common they were nearly wet through, and the terrific lightning and reverberating thunder were quite enough to appall older and stouter hearts; and they had still another quarter of a mile ere they could reach the village.

Although the common itself could boast of neither tree nor shrub, yet just at its edge stood one of those gigantic oaks which the settler's ax had spared. Beneath its branches the whole party could easily find shelter, and although the storm had been raging for some five minutes, its foliage was so dense that the ground underneath it was quite dry. "Let us get under the oak," said one little panting mortal. "Ay, ay," was echoed and re-echoed by several, whilst all as quickly as possible put the resolution into practice. Just then, one little girl suddenly said: "We ought not to stay here. I've heard of lightning striking trees and killing any one who happened to be under." And at last she persuaded them to face the storm once more; nor did they stop again till they reached the village, where they took refuge.

The storm, furious in its character, soon spent itself; and an hour and a half after, several of the same little people, well fed, and attired in dry clothing, were again making their way to the school, when suddenly, with blanched cheeks, they saw the old oak which had withstood the storms of centuries, still standing, certainly, but with several of its branches torn off, others broken and hanging loose, and its huge trunk scorched as though a fire had been kindled all around it. The tree had been struck by lightning. The news of the narrow escape was soon known; and feelings of admiration for the presence of mind displayed by the little girl were mingled with thankfulness for the narrow escape which she and her companions had made.

Perhaps the story may teach those who are unaware of the danger to avoid the shelter of solitary trees during a thunder-storm. Nothing can be more hazardous, a fact which the death-rates by lightning thus attracted show.

◆

HOW TO SEE THE WIND.

TAKE a polished metallic surface of two feet or more, with a straight edge—a large handsaw will answer the purpose. Take a windy day, whether hot or cold, clear or cloudy, only not let it rain or the air be murky; in other words, let the air be dry and clear, but this is not essential. Hold your metallic surface at right angles to the direction of the wind—*i. e.*, if the wind is north, hold your surface east and west, but instead of holding the surface vertical, incline it about forty-five degrees to the horizon, so that the wind striking glances and flows over the edge (keeping it straight) as water over a dam. Now sight carefully over the edge at some minute and sharply defined object, and you will see the air flows over as water flows over a dam. Make your observations carefully, and you will scarcely fail to see the air, no matter how cold; the result is even better when the sun is obscured.

◆

THE Burlington *Free Press* contains an account of a little girl's wanderings and death in the forests about Ripton. Two little girls, the daughters of Mr. J. E. Goodyear, were sent on an errand to a neighbor's house half a mile away. Returning, one of them went by the road, and the other took a footpath through the woods. Julia, who had gone by the road, returned home safely, but the other, Bertha, who was only nine years old, did not appear, and her mother, becoming anxious, started at once in search of her daughter. Soon finding that the little girl had wandered from the path, she gave an alarm and a small body of men that constantly received accessions formed a skirmish line, and the forest was thoroughly searched for about a mile and a half with no success, except the finding of the girl's tracks at two widely separated points. All the logging roads with which the forest abounded were closely examined, when the darkness put an end to the search for a few hours. Reinforcements having arrived a force of over a hundred men followed the roads by lantern light for an hour or two, when that failing a halt was ordered until daybreak, when some hundred and fifty men pushed on, determined to find the little one. They found tracks following the north branch of Middlebury River, which flows through some steep hills in a rough rocky chasm that would appall any one but the strongest nerves from undertaking its descent. For some mile and a half further the girl was tracked, in which distance she crossed the branch twice, and having reached the junction of the stream with the south fork, she again crossed the stream, clambered up a high, almost perpendicular rock, and, overcome by the excessive exertions of the past few hours, lost her hold and fell thirty feet to the rocks and river below, crushing in a small portion of the skull in the upper part of her forehead. She was apparently instantly killed, and floated into an eddy of shallow water, where she was found about 6:30 by the searchers, and after a little delay taken to her almost distracted parents.

A LITTLE HERO.—A house belonging to Captain Bennett, of Mackinac, situated on the north shore, near the Scheneaux, was burned recently. The three children of the Indian who had charge of the place had been left locked up in the house, while he and his wife were visiting his wife's mother. The eldest of the children was a boy eight years of age. The house took fire in the night, and the boy, not being able to get out of the doors, and the windows being securely fastened, was only able to escape by taking an ax and chopping his way out of the window. He then took the younger children out. They remained about the house till morning, wrapping their feet up in some blankets to keep from freezing. They waited until noon the next day for their parents to come, and they not doing so, the little fellow put the two smaller ones on a hand-sled and hauled them down to their grandfather's, four miles distant.

A LITTLE time ago a young man died in Philadelphia who was popularly known, from his swiftness in running, as "Deer." His story was a singular one. A few years since he was a ragged, shrewd lad, peddling newspapers about the railroad depots. One day he happened to be on the line of the Pennsylvania Railroad, when he saw an engine rushing down the track without any driver or tender. By some chance it had been separated from the cars, and was driving on alone. The boy knew it would meet an express-train this side of the next station. He had about four minutes' start, and darted down the track after it. The engine was, of course, not at full speed, yet nobody but Deer could have won in such a race. He did win; was cool enough to remember the signal to the station-keeper necessary to have the switch placed so that the engine would be turned on to another track. It was done just two seconds before the express-train went thundering by. Deer, for this service, was granted by the Pennsylvania Railroad corporation a monopoly of the newspaper and book trade on its trunk route, and from this he derived a handsome income. It was to the boy's coolness, as well as to his fleetness, that hundreds of human beings owed their lives.

THE ROUND TABLE.

PRIZES.

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ANSWERS TO RIDDLES, ETC., IN No. 672.

1. Coal-e-scent. 2. B. Tin, Tutor, Bitumen, Nomad, Red, N. 3. Eclat, Crane, Latin, Anise, Tenet. 4. Air. 5. Blush, Flush, Plush, Slush. 6. Cord. 7. Natural History—NortH, AgoutI, ThameS, UnpleasanT, RialtO, AuthoR, LibrarY. 8. Rose, Opal, Sack, Elks. 9. Beau, Bow. 10. Part, Trap.

WINNERS OF PRIZES IN No. 672.

1.—M. Thomas, 269 East Baltimore Street, Baltimore, Md.

2.—R. M. Eastman, Melrose, Mass.

3.—A. C. Holden, Morrisania, N. Y.

ENIGMAS, CHARADES, ETC.

1.—DIAMOND PUZZLE.

A VOWEL; to decline; a Roman magistrate; a lady's-maid; to mine; a vowel and a pronoun; fifty.

2.—ENIGMA.

I go before, I go behind;
I'm trodden on by all mankind;
I'm fat and thin, I'm round and square,
As large as a tower, and small as a pear.
I follow all kings wherever they go;
I follow all monarchs, high people and low;
In Winter and Summer I'm still the same,
So please guess aright and tell my name.

3.—CHARADE.

He stands, the wretched mutineer,
His eyes fast fixed upon the deck;
His sunburnt face is blanched with fear;
The fatal noose is round his neck;
And standing out against the sky,
And mirrored in the sea beneath,
Above the culprit doomed to die,
My whole looms like impending death.

He heard his doom pronounced in court—
He knows the punishment is just;
His trembling limbs refuse support;
He fears to die—yet die he must.
He gazes round—there is no hope!
Despair now takes the place of fear,
For soon a first or two of rope
Will end his short misspent career.

The preparations are complete;
His mates are slowly filing past;
The shot is fastened to his feet,
His seconds, too, are pinioned fast.
The word is given—the end is near;
One moment more—— But, if you please,
Young folks, we'll drop the curtain here;
We care not for such scenes as these.

4.—DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

Primals and finals create havoc untold,
The dread of landsman brave and sailor bold.

A member of the solar system my first you'll surely find;
A city of Japan my next, now do you bear in mind:
This is a gaping mouth, from which destruction oft is wrought;
This animal Job mentions, to be shunned instead of sought;
A letter of the Greek alphabet my next does now appear;
A nymph of fabled story this, whom ancients did revere;
My next a sound will surely be, of letters four composed,
And if you put your wits to work the whole will be exposed.

5.—SQUARE WORDS.

If you would wish my first to see,
An isle 'twill bring to view;
And next what's lent will surely be,
But not, I hope, to you;
My third a place will bring to mind
In which our corn we store;
In last a girl's name you will find,
So now I'll say no more.

6.—SEVEN HIDDEN TREES.

Dear ma, please let me first say,
Nel, Mabel, Archie and I,
Are going to-morrow to Cork
To bid nice, darling Bessie good-by.
She's going to be married next week,
And pa, as her guardian, you see,
Will have to arrange everything,
And Bessie was glad to have me.
Oh, mother, a terrible fire
Broke out in our city last night;
Five houses were burned to the ground.
It gave us a terrible fright.
So now, ma, I think I'll conclude—
You know that we must be up early;
So with love to yourself, Nel and May,
I remain, your affectionate daughter.

7.—REVERSION.

My whole an uncooked thing will be;
Reverse it now, I ween,
A little word, though dreaded much,
Will quickly then be seen.

8.—CHARADE.

On earth my first is very rare,
And is with man his greatest care;
"Under the spreading chestnut-tree"
My second you will surely see.
A favorite poet whole will name,
Who died and left a living fame;
Some "Ugly" called this witty man.
Now tell the answer if you can.

9.—TRIPLE ACROSTIC.

Three kingdoms great by us are shown,
An animal, first, in Europe known,
Centrals, a plant, not rare, but green,
A mineral in last is to be seen.

To infuse, 'tis true, this doth express;
A country in South America, guess;
Needful, a word well known to you;
Tending toward a yellow hue.

10.—TRANSPOSITION.

I'm an article a lady loves,
I fit as close as a pair of gloves,
But yet I'm rarely seen.
You'll find I'm always worn in state,
By rich and poor, the low and great,
And even by the queen.
Now when this word of mine you find,
If you transpose it in your mind
You'll find a room—'tis high.
'Tis always high, this room, I hear,
So can't be low, 'tis very clear,
And it you can't deny.

FUN FOR THE BOYS.

A SCHOOLBOY had divided the surface of the earth into four zones, the rigid, the horrid, the temperate, and the intemperate.

A SMALL boy made a sensation for a short time by quietly transferring a card bearing the words "Take one" from a lot of handbills in front of a store to a basket of oranges.

A COURTLY negro recently sent a reply to an invitation, in which he "regretted that circumstances repugnant to the acquiescence would prevent his acceptance to the invite."

YOUNG ladies who wish to have small mouths are advised to repeat this at frequent intervals during the day: "Fanny Finch fried five floundering frogs for Francis Fowler's father."

ONE of a party of six Highland District boys who are spending their vacation at Kennebunk, sent the following expressive letter: "We dug a woodchuck out of his hole; it was a skunk; we slept in the barn that night."

A POLITICAL speaker, after the nominations had been made, exclaimed: "The battle is now opened! Let every man do his duty!" But the compositor made it "the bottle is now opened!" and then the other side had their inning.

DISMAL.—A schoolboy spelt d-e-c-i-m-a-l and pronounced it dismal. "What do you mean by calling that dismal?" exclaimed the teacher. "'Cause it is," answered the boy. "It's dismal fractions. All fractions are dismal. There isn't a bit of fun in any of 'em."

LITTLE Freddie was undergoing the disagreeable operation of having his hair combed by his mother, and he grumbled at the manœuvre. "Why, Freddie," said mamma, "you ought not to make such a fuss. I don't fuss and cry when my hair is combed." "Yes," replied the youthful party, "but your hair is hitched to your head."

THE conundrum tournament is the newest fashionable game at the West-side. A beauty of photographic celebrity bore away the prize the other night by a rather neat interrogatory—to wit: "Who made the first egg-stand?" The answer, which puzzled the guessing circle, was simple, nevertheless—Christopher Columbus.

A BRAINLESS young noodle stopped a gruff old merchant on the street, and said: "I have a thought." "Have you?" said the merchant. "I'll go right off and hunt up a reporter, and tell him about the accident." And as the old man started off the young fellow was so amazed that he couldn't think of what he thought.

THE flowing reporter who wrote, with reference to a well-known belle, "Her dainty feet were incased in shoes that might have been taken for fairy boots," tied his wardrobe up in his handkerchief and left for parts unknown, when it appeared the next morning, "Her dirty feet were incased in shoes that might be taken for ferry boats."

A DRAWING-MASTER who had been worrying a pupil with contemptuous remarks about his deficiency of skill in the use of the pencil ended by saying: "If you were to draw me, for example, tell me what part you would draw first." The pupil, with meaning in his eye, looked up in the master's face and quietly said: "Your neck, sir."

A SCHOOL for poor children, having read in the Bible the denunciations against hypocrites who "strain at a gnat and swallow a camel," were afterward examined by the benevolent patroness, Lady E——, as to their recollections of the chapter. "What, in particular, was the sin of the Pharisees, children?" said the lady. "Eating camels, my lady," was the prompt reply.

THE boy stood on the burning deck,
He wished that he were dead;
Till all of a sudden into the river
He dashed heels over head.
The steamer steamed upon its way,
The boy, oh! where was he?
He was kicking his heels in the tumbling surf
As jolly as he could be.

HER HAND.—"Will you give me your hand?" sternly said a country schoolmaster to a girl who had refused to hold out her hand to be feruled. As she answered not, he said: "Do you refuse to give me your hand?" "I must," she sobbed, "unless pa consents." She was pretty, and the old man had a hundred and sixty acres, all paid for and well stocked, and so there was no difficulty in adjusting matters.

THE late Doctor R——, familiarly known amongst his friends as Old Tom, was the most genial of men, and one who could seldom resist telling a good story, even when it turned the laugh somewhat against himself. On one occasion a man-servant, whom he had recently engaged, astonished him by appearing to wait at breakfast with a swollen face and a pair of unmistakably black eyes. "Why, John," said he, "you seem to have been fighting?" "Yes, master, I have," was the reply. "And who may your opponent have been?" "Why, sir, Doctor M——'s man (naming a rival Esculapius)." "And what did you fall out about, pray?" "Why, sir, he said as you wasn't fit to clean his master's shoes." "And what did you say?" "Well, sir, I said *as you was!*"

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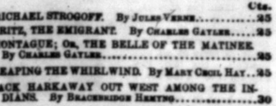

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THE FOUNDERING OF THE "ARCTIC."

THE *Arctic*, commanded by Captain Luce, was a noble steamship. She sailed from Liverpool on the 20th September, 1854, with two hundred and thirty-three passengers; her crew, all told, numbering one hundred and fifty men.

Nothing worthy of note occurred until noon of Wednesday, the 27th, when she was on the banks of Newfoundland, and about fifty miles from the coast, with the wind about west by south. A thick fog had prevailed during the day; sometimes it cleared off so as to allow an object to be seen half a mile off, and then again it settled down as densely as before. Two men were on the lookout on the forecastle, and the usual vigilance is supposed to have been exercised.

Many of the passengers were gathered in the cabin preparatory to luncheon, and Captain Luce had left the deck for the purpose of working out the ship's position, when, at about fifteen minutes past noon, a cry was heard from the officer of the deck of "Hard a starboard." A steamer under all sail was seen running down on the starboard bow of the *Arctic*. The stranger the next instant struck her bow, and bounding off, as it were, passed rapidly astern, and was lost to sight in the fog. The stranger's bows, from the glance obtained of her, appeared to have been literally crushed off for about ten feet, and all on board the *Arctic* believed she must sink in a few minutes. Not aware that his own ship had materially suffered, Captain Luce's impulse was to endeavor to save the lives of those on board, and he accordingly ordered the first officer, Mr. Gourlay, to lower a boat and ascertain what damage she had received. A boat had also been dispatched from the stranger to learn the state of the *Arctic*; this, unhappily getting under the *Arctic's* paddle-box, was stove in, one of her crew only being hauled on board. From this man, a Frenchman, it was ascertained that the stranger was the iron screw-steamer *Vesta*, from St. Pierre, bound to Granville. Severe as was the damage she had received, the injury she had inflicted on the *Arctic* was still more terrific. On hurrying forward, Captain Luce found that the *Vesta's* iron anchor-stock had been driven through the bows of the *Arctic* about eighteen inches above the water-line, and at the same instant the fluke of the anchor had made an immense hole two feet below the water-line, raking fore and aft the planking.

So furiously did the water pour in, that in a few minutes it was over the cargo, and the lower fires were put out. Immediately bilge-injections were put on, the engines and steam-pumps were set to work with the remaining fires, and the fore-deck pumps worked by passengers and crew, while the ship was headed for the land. Efforts were also made to check the leak by getting sails over the bows, but all were in vain.

The chief mate's boat now appeared astern, but the captain dared not stop to pick her up. The *Arctic* had six other boats. Captain Luce, hopeless of saving the ship, ordered them to be got ready, and the ladies and children placed in. Two were lowered safely; but, to the shame of manhood, no sooner had they reached the water than the firemen, several of the seamen and some of the male passengers rushed into them, in spite of all opposition. On this, the captain ordered the boats to be veered astern, and to be kept in readiness until order could be somewhat restored; but to his dismay he saw the men cut the painters, the boats disappearing in the fog. A fourth boat was on the point of being lowered, several ladies and children being already in her, when, while she was yet hanging at the davits, a number of men frantically sprang in also; one of the falls giving way, and the others getting foul, she fell almost upright, nearly all being precipitated into the sea, the greater number of whom were drowned. The seamen, however, quickly righted her, but while she was still alongside, numbers leaped in, and she was speedily loaded to her gunwale; of others still endeavoring to gain her, many were drowned.

The chief engineer, with some of his assistants, had taken the smallest deck-boat, and had pulled away with about fifteen persons in her.

Had discipline prevailed, how different might have been the fate of many! There were, however, some noble exceptions to the dastardly conduct of those who deserted their comrades in the hour of danger. Mr. Walker, one of the engineers, with Patrick Tobin, a fireman, continued to work the steam-pumps as long as the fires remained alight. Tobin's last act was to throw in some coal, but the water reaching the furnaces, and all further efforts being useless, they sprang on deck. There the passengers were working with desperate energy at the forward pumps; French, Germans and English calling in their different languages—hurrying to and fro, now rushing to the pumps, and again rushing away when relieved by others. Many, however, remained coolly courageous and resigned, placing implicit confidence in the captain and officers. Among others, a young gentleman named Holland, of Washington, who was on board for the purpose of getting instruction in engineering, exhibited the noblest heroism. He had been directed by the captain to fire the signal gun when all others had fled, and amid the melancholy outcry he steadily pursued his duty.

Mrs. Dolan, a lady-passenger, also displayed great energy and presence of mind; for she managed, by superhuman exertions, to carry her sick husband on deck and assist him to the boats.

While the other boats were being lowered, Captain Luce was engaged in getting the starboard guard-boat ready, and standing by the falls, he ordered the second officer, Mr. Baahlam, to take the command, and employ her in the best way he could. Before, however, she had reached the water, and when the mate and only three others were in her, it became necessary to cut away the falls to save her from being broken down. At that moment one of the passengers, as the steamer moved ahead, threw himself overboard, and was received into the boat. Others, with seamen and stokers, followed, till a number were seen struggling for life on the surface. Their wild shrieks for help were heartrending, and those already in the boat hastened to haul them in till the boat was full. The captain then ordered Mr. Baahlam to row after the ship, to be ready to take on board the women and children as soon as the engines stopped.

Another quarter-boat still remained, but she was broken down and hanging by one tackle. A rush was made for her, and some dozen or fifteen men succeeded in getting in, and having cut the tackle, were soon out of sight.

The captain now discovered that scarcely a seaman, and not a carpenter, was left on board to assist in building a raft; Mr. Dorian, the third mate, who had gallantly supported him from the first, being the only officer who remained. He, with the assistance of a Captain Grann, a passenger, and a few others, mostly landsmen, set to work with coolness and energy to construct it. They succeeded, after great effort, in getting the fore and main-yards, maintop-sail, and two top-gallant yards overboard, and such other small spars and materials as they could collect, with ropes and ratlin-stuff for lashing them together.

It at length became evident that the *Arctic* could not float much longer, and before the raft could be put together it was necessary to launch the life-boat, the only one remaining. This difficult task was successfully accomplished, and the captain ordered Mr. Dorian to take charge of her, and in order to prevent her being run away with, he kept the oars on board. The two sea-officers and their few assistants were laboring at the raft. While they were thus engaged, the cry arose that the ship was sinking. A panic seized the passengers; a rush was made, and in spite of the efforts of the captain and a few gentlemen to prevent them, numbers precipitated themselves over the bulwarks on to the raft, making their way toward the boat.

In vain the captain endeavored to keep back the frantic multitude, pointing out to them that the boat was the last refuge for the hapless women and children. Nothing could stop them. Already the boat was completly full. The rope which held her to the raft was cut, and though they were without oars, those already in her began with their hands and axes to paddle away. Mr. Dorian, finding that he could do no more, leaped into the boat, and assisted Captain Grann, who followed him. Two other persons were picked up who swam for her.

Had they remained a moment longer, the boat would have been swamped by the numbers who were leaping down the side.

Five hours only had passed since the *Arctic* had been struck. Numbers had leaped overboard and been drowned, probably a hundred were clinging to the imperfectly constructed raft, while others were still on deck lashing together doors, casks, stools, settees—indeed, everything that would float—to save their lives.

The fatal moment was rapidly approaching. The sea was flush with the dead-lights. The captain had mounted to the starboard paddle-box, holding his young son in his arms. Lower and lower the ship sank. Even when her deck was almost level with the sea, young Holland was still laboring at his gun. His last shot boomed out, sounding the knell of the sinking ship; he, alas! sinking with her, having persevered to the end in his duty.

And now the surging waters closed over the noble vessel. Down, down she went, into the depths of ocean; those who remained on deck, as she sank by the stern, being dashed forward against the funnel. Then, as the foaming surges went boiling over the tumbling heap of human beings, one wild, piercing shriek arose. It sounded but for a moment; the next, the whole struggling mass was engulfed, and all was still. In a few seconds many rose to the surface, some bold swimmers striking out toward pieces of the wreck, others casting up their arms imploringly as they sank for ever beneath the waves.

Mr. Dorian's was the only boat in sight, but, already overcrowded, those on board could do nothing for the preservation of their hapless companions. Nearly eighty persons, several being women, were clinging to the large raft. One of the spars of which it was composed catching in the paddle-wheel, a portion was carried away, and several of those on it were engulfed.

Among those who had remained on board the ship to the last was Mr. Peter McCabe. He was engaged aft with two men in lashing some casks together, when, as she sank, he was engulfed in the surging waters. Down he went, and the terrible thought came upon him that he was drowning, and should never see his friends again. Still he retained his consciousness, and it was with a feeling of intense joy he found, in about half a minute, that he was rapidly rising to the surface. Before all was darkness, now he could see a dim light above him, and in a few seconds he was at the top of the water, struggling for life. Being a good swimmer, and having, besides, the support of a life-preserver, he succeeded in reaching a door which was floating close to the spot where he rose.

Not a trace of the vessel was to be seen, except a few loose timbers and the rafts floating about, a few people clinging to some of them. Finding that he could not retain his hold of the door, he left it and swam to a barrel which lay a few feet from him. From this again he swam to the large raft, to which numbers of human beings were at that time clinging. Nearly all were submerged to their armpits, while a few could with difficulty keep their heads above the surface.

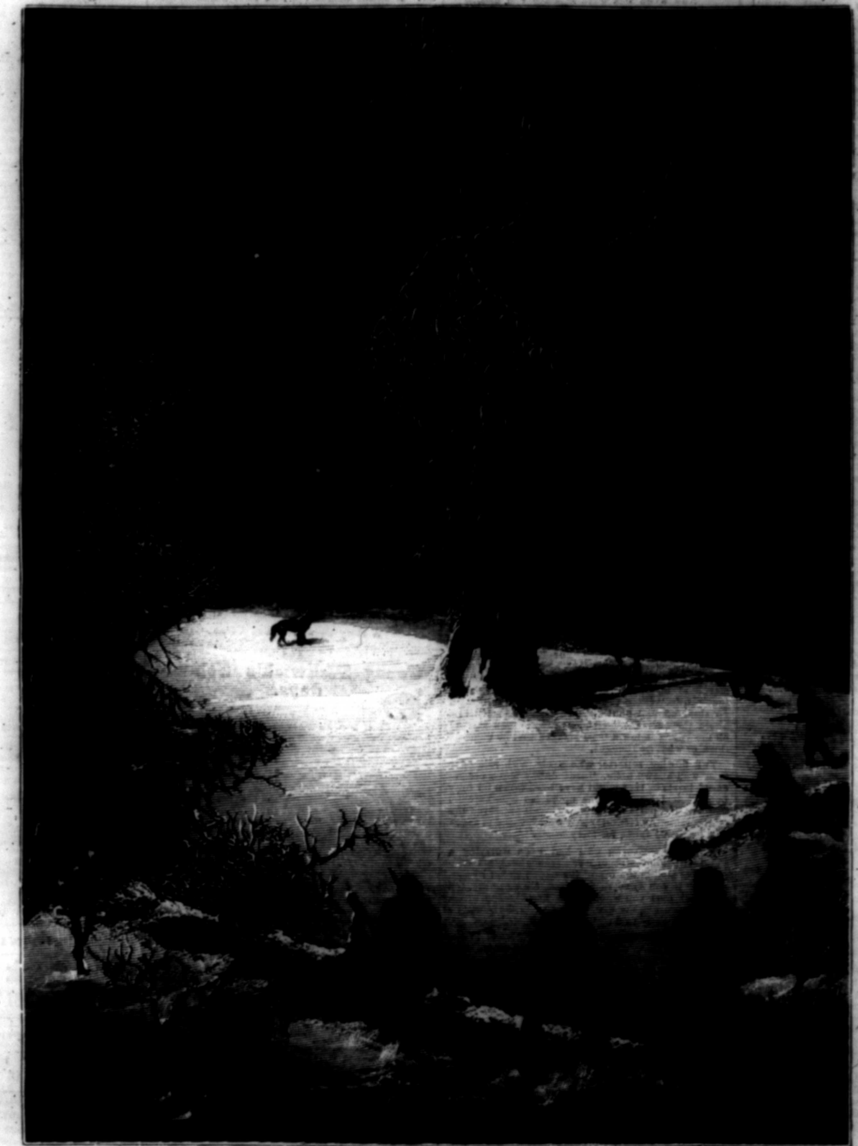
In a short time one after another began to drop into their watery graves from sheer exhaustion. Still Mr. McCabe, a strong, hardy man, retained his courage. Hour after hour passed by, another and another of his companions sank by his side and fell into the water.

Eighteen hours passed, and but four remained. One of those gave him a small parchment, the title-deeds to property. A few minutes afterward he, too, unloosed his hold, and was added to the number of those who floated about the raft.

A second night was closing on McCabe, now alone on his raft. Since the *Arctic* foundered not a drop of fresh water had cooled his lips, not a particle of food had entered his mouth; his strength was beginning to give way, his sight had become so dim that he could no longer perceive objects, though but a few feet off. Still the love of life was strong; he would make one more effort to save it. He raised himself on his knees and gazed around. Did his fancy deceive him? Through the dusk of evening he saw, or thought he saw, a vessel. His strength seemed to revive; eagerly he listened, gasping for breath.

A few more minutes passed. Yes, yes, he was not mistaken; the voices of persons in an approaching boat reached his ears. In a brief space he, too, would have gone.

As he was about to sink back he felt himself seized by the collar, and dragged by a strong hand into the bow of a boat.



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